"A GIRL AND A MILLION; OR, THE CROOKED LEGISLATORS," IN NEXT ISSUE
ALSO, "THE BOY WITH MUSCLE," A THRILLER FOR BRAVE YOUNG HEARTS

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A Woman Scorned;

Or, THE TRAIL OF A FLOWER

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CHAPTER I.
THE BLACK BOX.

"I WELCOME you back, Cletus. It looks like old times to see your face again. The suns of Europe and the tropics have tanned your cheeks."

"Yes," answered Cletus McQuade, as he looked half wearily around De Courcy's bachelor apartments. "I'm glad to get back to the old stamping grounds once more. But what is this?"

He rose suddenly and crossed the room to a mantelpiece from which he took a little box done in black ivory and curiously carved. He held it in his hands while he shot his friend a staring look.

De Courcy laughed.

"That," said he, "came into my possession about a month ago in a singular manner."

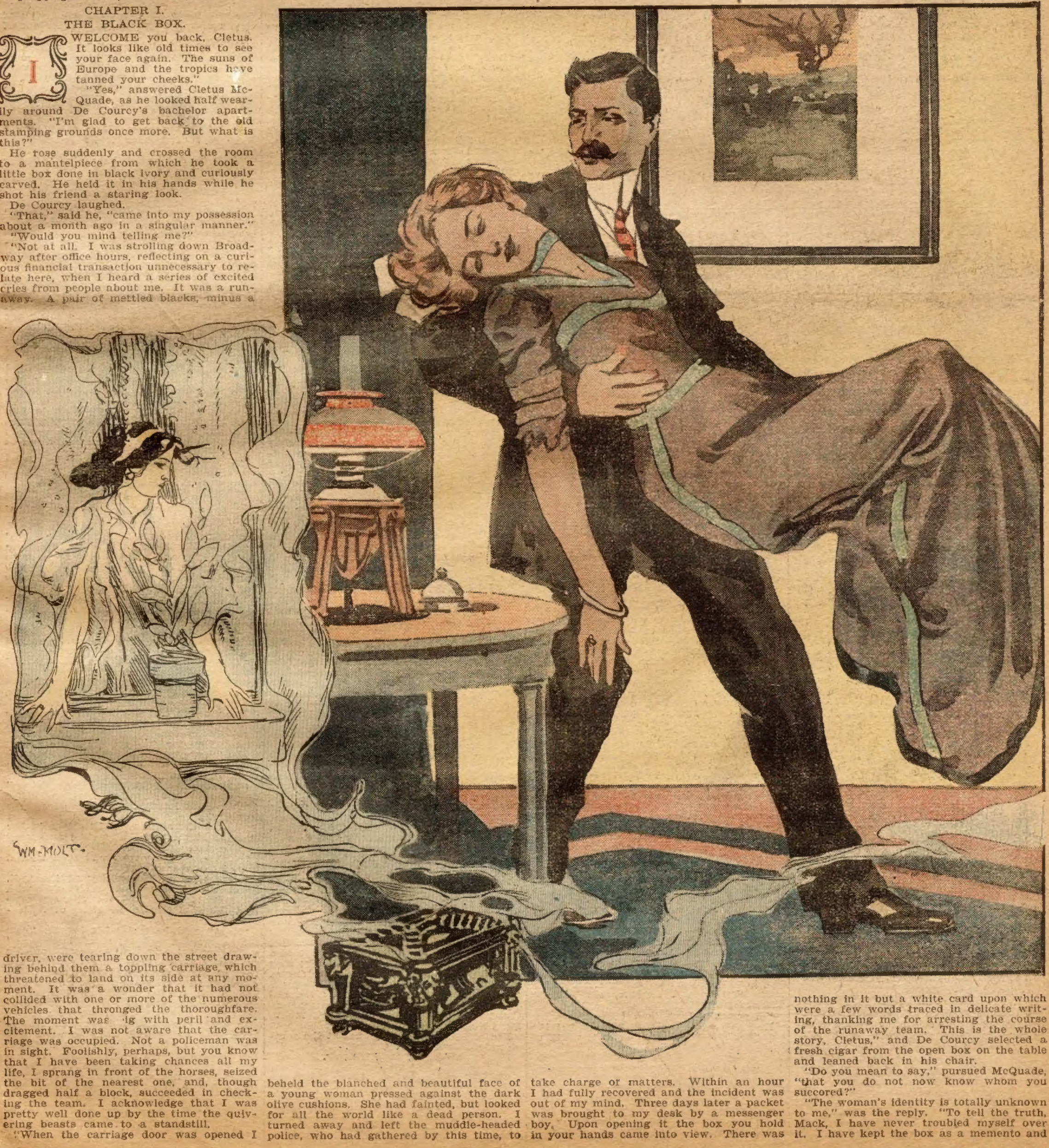
"Would you mind telling me?"

"Not at all. I was strolling down Broadway after office hours, reflecting on a curious financial transaction unnecessary to relate here, when I heard a series of excited cries from people about me. It was a runaway. A pair of mettled blacks, minus a driver, were tearing down the street drawing behind them a toppling carriage, which threatened to land on its side at any moment. It was a wonder that it had not collided with one or more of the numerous vehicles that thronged the thoroughfare. The moment was big with peril and excitement. I was not aware that the carriage was occupied. Not a policeman was in sight. Foolishly, perhaps, but you know that I have been taking chances all my life, I sprang in front of the horses, seized the bit of the nearest one, and, though dragged half a block, succeeded in checking the team. I acknowledge that I was pretty well done up by the time the quivering beasts came to a standstill.

"When the carriage door was opened I beheld the blanched and beautiful face of a young woman pressed against the dark olive cushions. She had fainted, but looked for all the world like a dead person. I turned away and left the muddle-headed police, who had gathered by this time, to take charge of matters. Within an hour I had fully recovered and the incident was out of my mind. Three days later a packet was brought to my desk by a messenger boy. Upon opening it the box you hold in your hands came into view. There was nothing in it but a white card upon which were a few words traced in delicate writing, thanking me for arresting the course of the runaway team. This is the whole story, Cletus," and De Courcy selected a fresh cigar from the open box on the table and leaned back in his chair.

"Do you mean to say," pursued McQuade, "that you do not now know whom you succored?"

"The woman's identity is totally unknown to me," was the reply. "To tell the truth, Mack, I have never troubled myself over it. I have kept the box as a memento and



if you had not brought the incident to my mind I might never have recurred to it."

McQuade shifted the box from one hand to the other and lifted it to his face.

"You have noticed the strange and pervading perfume which emanates from it, haven't you?" he asked.

"Yes. I cannot say that I have ever inhaled anything just like it."

"It is stephanotis," said McQuade. "You don't run across it often this side the Atlantic. It is extracted from a peculiar flower that grows in Madagascar and for some time this perfume has been the rage of Paris among a certain set. But this is not the strangest thing connected with this box."

"What is more strange than the perfume?"

"I have seen the box before. I purchased it in Paris two years ago."

Instantly the deep, dark eyes of De Courcy lit up with unbridled interest.

"You did?" he exclaimed. "Then you know—"

"Not now!" cried McQuade, throwing up his hands, as his face changed to a ghastly white. "The story may be told some other time. We will discuss other themes for the present."

He restored the box to its accustomed place on the mantelpiece and rubbed his hands as if to rid them of any perfume that may have lingered. As he turned back to De Courcy he glanced out of the window and the next moment became a statue before his old-time friend.

"My God!" rang from his lips. "Look! She's yonder now—in the house across the way—at the window! In the name of heaven, Clay, tell me how long that woman has been your neighbor."

Clay De Courcy sprang to his feet and rushed to the window.

"Too late!" cried McQuade, sinking into a chair. "She's gone now. The last act of a strange life drama is at hand. The curtain is about to rise upon it. Can you say who lives across the street?"

"Oh, in number sixty-six? The house has been empty for months. I was not aware that it had a tenant."

"It has to my doom!" was the reply. "The most cunning hand in all this world has just drawn the curtains. Get writing materials, Clay. I want to dictate my last will and testament."

If the last words of the pale-faced man had sounded his doom De Courcy would not have been more astonished. He looked at his friend, wondering if he had not suddenly been deprived of his reason. McQuade sat limp, colorless and motionless in the chair. Within the last five minutes he seemed to have aged ten years.

"Your will?" exclaimed De Courcy. "Nonsense, old boy. You're good for fifty years yet. A man who has threaded the jungles of the tropics, climbed the Himalayas and visited every capital of the old world holds a brave lease on life and—"

He paused abruptly for there was no sign that he had been heard.

He was at McQuade's side in an instant. "Look here, Mack!" he cried, and fell back suddenly. "There's no woman across the street. You've been dreaming. The house is empty. I was sitting at the window but yesterday and saw no signs of life there."

De Courcy did not proceed, but threw his cigar upon the table and leaned over the face in the chair. McQuade had swooned.

Leaving his friend for a moment, De Courcy went to the window. The house opposite showed no signs of tenancy. The curtains which he had noticed before were drawn and the face which McQuade insisted he had seen was not visible. It was a puzzle to Clay De Courcy.

"A woman across the way?" he ejaculated. "It cannot be. I wonder if Mack has come back a hasheesh fiend? He never was addicted to those body-wrecking and soul-killing drugs they worship across the sea. What has come over him?"

He stood at the window a few moments and then turned to his companion. The whiteness of McQuade's features had not changed. He lay like one dead in the chair, his hands hanging limp over the sides and his chin resting on his bosom.

At last De Courcy began to restore his friend to consciousness, not an easy task, but at length McQuade's eyes slowly opened and became fixed on his face in a horrified stare.

"You doubt me, Clay?" he said. "But it was no vision. She was yonder, at the window across the street, the bane of my life, my beautiful nemesis!"

"Tell me, Mack—"

"Why should I confess? Why should I open that one chapter of my life which I had hoped was sealed forever? I'll come to-morrow. Then, if I am alive, you shall draw up my last will and testament."

He got upon his feet totteringly and sent a fearsome look out of the window.

"I'll investigate," said De Courcy. "I'll find out who is across the street, if any one is really there."

"Don't!" cried McQuade, clutching De Courcy's arm. "For the love of heaven don't rush to your own doom. Would to God you hadn't stopped that maddened team!"

With these words his hand fell from his friend's arm and he dropped back.

"Remember, at this hour to-morrow—four o'clock—if I am living," said he in trembling tones.

"Where are you putting up?"

"For the present at the house of my old landlady, Mrs. Prescott, Wellington street. She was glad to see me. And how little Dolly has grown! Why, she was but a chit of a girl when I went away. The few years have brought her out wonderfully. She's a beauty now. Well, to-morrow in this room at four—if I live."

"But you'll live, Mack."

"I—don't—know," slowly answered McQuade. "Life's uncertain. But that woman across the street. Ugh!" and with a shiver plainly perceptible the man from the old world moved towards the door.

De Courcy heard him descend the stair and turned back.

"What infernal mystery is this?" he exclaimed. "If there is a woman opposite how did she ever enter into McQuade's life? And why does he fear her? By Jove! I'll learn something of her before he comes back."

Once more he went to the window and looked across the street. He imagined that some one stood behind the curtains which appeared to be parted just a trifle and he really thought he saw a hand, white and delicate. Was the owner of the black box there, watching him? He remained at the window a few moments and then withdrew. As he turned toward the door it was opened and a young maid handed him a letter.

She was gone before he could break the seal. The next moment De Courcy sank into a chair with the unfolded bit of paper in his hands.

He read at a glance the following brief message:

"Calledon Sinclair has been found dead in his rooms!"

CHAPTER II.

THE PERFUMED GLOVE.

There were few men better known in the great city than Calledon Sinclair.

Possessed of vast wealth and the head of one of the most prominent financial houses, he commanded the respect of every one. He had been a widower for years, occupying a handsome suite of rooms at The Imperial, with his adopted daughter, Miss Nova. The Sinclairs had never been blessed with offspring, hence they had adopted the young girl, who came of good family, and she had grown to beauteous womanhood under their care.

De Courcy, who had been admitted to the bar, though he had never entered upon an active practice, had become connected with the firm of Sinclair &-Martin in a manner satisfactory to the house and through this connection he had been thrown much in the company of Miss Nova.

The message threw him into a state of surprise and wonderment.

If a thunderbolt had suddenly fallen at his feet he would not have been more astounded.

He obeyed his first impulse and in a few moments was on the street, buried in the shaded recesses of a motor car which was hurrying him to The Imperial.

When he reached the hotel he rushed at once to the Sinclair apartments where he suddenly came face to face with the young girl. Her face was white and drawn and the horror of the situation was visible in her lustrous eyes.

"You have come!" said she, heaving a sigh of genuine relief. "I told Villars to communicate with you."

"The message was brusque but sufficient," replied De Courcy and then he drew Nova to one side of the dimly-lighted room and continued:

"It must have been sudden. Villars said that he was found dead."

"In his chair at the desk," said the girl. "I had occasion to enter his room, although I knew he might be busy. We were going to the opera tonight and I wanted to consult him about the final arrangements. He had been closeted with a caller, one of his financial clients, I suppose, but I knew she had gone."

"It was a woman, then?"

De Courcy hardly knew why he put the question. He might have had the vision of McQuade in his mind.

"Yes," answered Nova, "she came early in the afternoon and remained perhaps an hour, but I have no definite information on this subject. However, Doctor Hazen says it was heart failure, brought about by some unexpected excitement. I never knew that papa had a weak heart, but such things are common nowadays and the unfortunates conceal their troubles from their friends. When I entered the room he was leaning back in his Morris chair which he had made to conform with the height of the desk, quite dead. On the floor at his feet—wait, I'll get it for you."

The girl disappeared and a moment later came back carrying something in her hand.

"I found this on the carpet," she continued. "The lady must have dropped it."

She extended toward De Courcy a woman's glove, a little thing of the latest fashion. It was black and had three gold buttons at the wrist.

The moment De Courcy took the glove an exclamation fell from his lips. A singular perfume had risen to his nostrils. It was the same odor that lingered around the little black box on his mantelpiece which McQuade had called stephanotis.

"What startles you?" asked Nova, looking up into his face. "Is there anything peculiar about the lady's glove?"

"Nothing but the perfume. Have you noticed it?"

"I could not help doing so. The fragrance is totally unknown to me and I have nearly all the latest perfumes in my room."

"This particular one——" began De Courcy, and there he paused. "Well, never mind. Who is in the room yonder?"

"Doctor Hazen came back awhile ago and is now with him."

At this moment the door opened and the stately figure of the well-known doctor presented itself. Glancing at De Courcy, the young girl withdrew and the two men were together.

"This is a sudden and terrible visitation," said Clay.

"It startles me," was the reply. "I have been Mr. Sinclair's physician since the death of his wife, ten years ago, and, while I knew he had heart trouble, I did not expect that excitement would snap the cords of life."

De Courcy was looking straight into the doctor's face.

"It was excitement, then?" he ventured.

"Yes. Miss Sinclair tells me that, so far as she knows, her father's last visitor was a woman."

De Courcy had crumpled the black glove and thrust it into his pocket.

"I am loath to believe," pursued Doctor Hazen, "that Sinclair had any feminine entanglements. He seemed to care for no woman but his adopted child. Do you know of any such?"

"None whatever," was the reply and De Courcy's fingers itched to draw forth the clew and present it to the man of science.

"Well, we will have to look somewhere for a solution of this sudden death. There's always a woman in the case. The French police are right when they say, 'Find the woman.'"

"But," said the young man, "if the strange woman was one of our clients how could she have excited Mr. Sinclair to the point of death?"

Doctor Hazen puzzlingly shook his head.

"That would be a case for the detectives," he said. "But under the circumstances I don't deem it necessary for the secret department to become connected with this affair."

"Doctor," returned De Courcy, resolved to relieve his mind, "you are acquainted with various perfumes?"

"Somewhat, but not to the extent of an expert perfumer. Some years ago in Paris I made a study of perfumes, but finding it too intricate and taxing I gave it up. But why do you ask?"

The glove came from De Courcy's pocket and was placed in the doctor's hand.

"Where did you get this?" he asked.

"Miss Sinclair found it on the floor when she entered the room after her foster-father's death."

"That accounts for it!" exclaimed Doctor Hazen with a smile. "I was summoned by 'phone to the house soon after Miss Sinclair's discovery and when the body was still in the chair. As I stooped over it a faint odor seemed to rise from the carpet and it is the same that emanates from this glove. What do you call it, Mr. De Courcy?"

"It is stephanotis."

"Ah, I remember the name! Doctor Faure's wife in Paris was in love with it and it was her favorite perfume. So you think the glove belongs to Mr. Sinclair's last caller?"

"Undoubtedly. It does not belong to Miss Nova."

"Well," concluded Doctor Hazen, "there's not much in the incident that I can see. It might furnish a clew to some clever detective, but with inexperienced persons like ourselves it amounts to nothing."

"Perhaps not," and De Courcy took the glove and restored it to his pocket.

"Are you going to run down the woman with the one glove?" curiously asked Doctor Hazen.

"I have a little curiosity to see the end of this incident."

"What if there was a skeleton in Sinclair's closet?"

"There are skeletons in many nowadays."

"Quite true. But what if the exposure of the Sinclair skeleton should work annoyance to Miss Nova——"

"I had not thought of that," broke in De Courcy. "I would not give her pain for the world."

"See that you do not," advised the doctor. "You are a discreet man, Mr. De Courcy. You are, I understand, a valued friend of the family. The young lady has been left alone in the world. This sudden blow is a terrible one for her. We can soften it by our friendship. Let us do so as far as we can."

At this moment the door opened and one of the strangest looking creatures that ever human eye rested upon came forward. The newcomer was a man, not over four feet in height, with arms as long as those of a giant ape. His clothes fitted him illy; they seemed to hang on his distorted frame. His face was round and blank with the exception of the eyes, which were black and glittered like twin gems. The nose was sharp and seemed to overhang his mouth like the beak of an owl.

Doctor Hazen, with a glance at the monstrosity, turned to De Courcy.

His voice dropped to a whisper.

"It's Caliban," said he.

"Yes. Sinclair got rid of him five years ago. His company became too insistent."

"Where has he been all this time?"

"Heaven knows," said De Courcy. "Just now he returns like a bird of evil omen."

At this juncture the man called Caliban sprang across the room and laid his hand on the knob of the door which opened upon the chamber of death.

Doctor Hazen was at his side in a moment.

"You can't go in there!" he said in commanding tones, as his hand fell upon the strange creature's shoulder.

A cry like a wild beast rang through the house and with superhuman strength Hazen was whirled back and the door jerked open.

CHAPTER III.

THE MYSTERY GROWS.

Whilst De Courcy and Doctor Hazen were looking at one another in utter astonishment the door closed with a thunderous bang and the imp disappeared.

"Man or beast?" ejaculated the doctor.

"A human enigma," was the reply.

"Where did he come from?"

"Spawned in perdition and a fugitive from Tartarus!" smiled DeCourcy.

In another moment the door opened again and Caliban came out. He paid not the slightest attention to the two gaping men in the larger room, but, crossing the carpet, stamped out and was gone.

"What did he do in there?" cried Doctor Hazen, leaping forward with DeCourcy at his heels.

They paused beside the inanimate and ghastly form which was outstretched upon a cot.

"Doubtless he only wanted to gratify his curiosity," spoke the man of science. "At any rate he seems to have disturbed nothing."

DeCourcy did not reply for he was staring at a certain spot on the wall. In another moment he had gone over to it and was turning his face toward his companion's.

"What is it, DeCourcy?" asked the doctor, coming alongside.

"Look! The arch-fiend has traced some cabalistic stuff here," and DeCourcy's finger indicated some marks which stood out in dark red on the wall.

At first the characters resembled some untranslated scrawl, but the keen eyes of Doctor Hazen began to bring order out of chaos.

"It's not so bad after all," he said, with a glance at DeCourcy. "Listen: 'A man reaps what he sows.' Ah, there's something human about that imp after all."

The men stared at the writing on the wall, the letters now of which seemed plain enough since Doctor Hazen had deciphered them.

"Did he do no more than this?" asked DeCourcy. "I wonder if he touched the dead?"

"Aye, he did," was the reply. "He has opened Sinclair's waistcoat. You can see where he placed his hand. He evidently was looking for something. Did he find it?"

"There's a broken ribbon at the throat," sadi DeCourcy. "Caliban's hunt must have been successful after all."

A narrow crimson ribbon was drawn into the light and proved that it had been parted by a quick, mad wrench. Doctor Hazen held it up for inspection.

"I wonder if Miss Nova can throw any light upon what was attached to this bit of cord," he went on. "Not now, DeCourcy. We must not invade the girl's sorrow at present. Time will unravel Caliban's secret, if he has one."

Hazen folded the ribbon and carefully placed it in his pocket, after which the garment of the dead was rearranged and both men left the room. In another moment Doctor Hazen was speeding away in his motor car.

DeCourcy once more stood face to face with Nova Sinclair. The incident connected with the misshapen man was so fresh in his mind that he involuntarily recurred to it.

"Have you seen any one within the last few minutes?" he asked as the girl's eyes seemed filled with a questioning look.

"I either saw that one wretch or I was dreaming," was the answer. "Was it Caliban?"

"It was Caliban," said DeCourcy.

"What did he want? What did he do?"

The beautiful girl was trembling from head to foot, and, fearing that she was on the fringe of a swoon, DeCourcy gently encircled her waist with his arm and drew her toward him.

"He disturbed no one," said he calmly looking away. "Has he bothered your father lately?"

"Not since the night of his dismissal five years ago. I thought him dead. How did he know——"

"Perhaps he did not know," answered DeCourcy, seeing that the girl could not proceed. "His coming hither may have been a coincidence. A man like that must be in collusion with the arch-fiends."

In another moment he regretted his words, for the last vestige of color fled from Nova's face and she swooned on his protecting arm. He bore her to a sofa and laid her gently thereon. Then he tapped a silver call-bell on a table and the girl's maid appeared.

"Take charge of your mistress, Avice," said he to the startled creature. "The events of the last hour have been too much for her."

He saw the stout maid lift Nova in her arms as if she were but a child and carry her from the chamber. He waited till he heard them on the stair and then tiptoed to the chamber of death.

Halting before the writing on the wall, he drew forth his handkerchief and with some effort obliterated the characters so that the spot showed no signs of defacement.

"Now," said he under his breath, "now for the woman with the strange perfume."

Meeting Avice in the hallway before his departure, he cautioned her to take good care of her mistress and went away.

An hour later he knew that all the city had heard of the financier's death. Already the extras were heralding it everywhere and he stopped and bought a paper.

In the seclusion of his room in Waterloo avenue he smoked while he went over the events of the last few hours. Night had fallen over the teeming town and the streets were ablaze with lights. Waterloo avenue was not a business thoroughfare, but rather a quiet residential street, not very wide, but lined with well-to-do houses, occupied, for the most part, by persons of moderate means, of whom he was one.

He moved his chair to the window from which McQuade had professed to have seen the face opposite and raised the curtain. The interior of his little chamber w

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dark; he had purposely left it so, in hopes that he might see and not be seen if the window across the way should frame the face which had startled his friend.

All at once a faint glow seemed to issue through the curtains of that very window. It grew in intensity till, leaning forward with his gaze riveted on the window, he believed that some one was in the house which he had assured McQuade was not tenanted.

The night was a rare one in the last week in May. The air was close as the last wind seemed to have died on the Bay and not a breath of air was stirring the blossoms on the trees that fringed it.

Slowly the curtain opposite was lifted and the lower sash shot upward. De Courcy bent forward till his face almost touched the pane and he scarcely seemed to breathe.

The next moment two hands were placed on the broad sill and a woman leaned out.

Though he had seen the owner of those hands but once and that in the carriage after the runaway which he had described to McQuade, he knew that once more he was face to face with the woman of the ivory box.

That she did not see him was evident. She remained at the window, casually looking up and down the avenue for a full minute and then slowly withdrew.

It was enough. De Courcy was assured that McQuade had not dreamed. He had really caught sight of the mysterious woman. She occupied the house opposite.

For another hour De Courcy remained at the window watching for another glimpse of the strange one, but his patience was not rewarded. The glow beyond the curtain faded away and the window was now dark as before.

Snatching up his hat the young man bolted for the door and was soon out on the street. The house loomed up before him in the glow of the electrics, but it seemed without a tenant. There was not a single sign of life about it.

"What devil's necromancy is this?" cried De Courcy. "Who is the woman of the strange perfume? Who lost her glove in Calledon Sinclair's rooms? And why was she there to snap by some means or other the cord of life?"

He sauntered down town and soon took a taxicab. It was not to the club he went, but to Wellington street where McQuade had taken up his old quarters.

A ring at the door of the unpretentious house brought forward a good looking young girl who stared at him as she held the door open.

"I've called to see the one who has returned," said he, knowing that Dolly would understand as well as if he spoke McQuade's name.

"He is not in. He went off an hour since in somewhat of a hurry. What is the matter with Mr. Cletus?"

"Why, Dolly?" asked De Courcy, with a familiarity which he thought not rude under the circumstances.

"I can hardly tell you. He acted so strange. When he first came he said he would occupy his rooms for an indefinite period, but he suddenly gave them up and is gone."

"Gone? Gone where?"

"Ah, he did not explain. You are Mr. De Courcy, are you not?"

"I am his friend, Clay De Courcy."

"Then the letter he left must be for you, for he said to hand it to you if you sought him."

With this Dolly ran upstairs and soon returned with an envelope which she placed in De Courcy's hands. He stepped to the light and almost tore the envelope open. An exclamation escaped his lips. Dolly Prescott watched him narrowly, waiting for news, but none came.

"I thank you—Dolly," said De Courcy, and he was gone.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAN ON THE PORCH.

Thirty miles from the great metropolis nestling among the Hohokus Hills, is a little hamlet of some local distinction. It is almost buried in a density of forest, with a sluggish stream at its outskirts and a profusion of bushes along its banks.

Night has fallen over the town. From over the range of hills comes the shriek of a train as it pursues its way westward, the sound dying out under the stars and the echoes lingering on the cool night air.

A solitary man, who evidently has alighted at the nearest station, three miles distant, approaches one of the lonely looking houses on the fringe of the village and mounts the old-fashioned porch, the unjointed boards of which creak under his tread. He is without baggage of any kind and as he approaches the door he stops and looks back.

A dog that has been watching him all the time sneaks forward and snarls at his heels. The man looks down at the animal and frightens him away with a kick.

As though his footsteps have been heard, a light appears in one of the windows beneath the porch and the door is opened. The man who appears in the entrance looks searchingly at the stranger and shakes his head.

"This is not a tavern," says he. "You will find an excuse for one at the other end of town."

"I am not seeking a tavern," is the reply, as the speaker puts one foot forward. "If I did I would not be here at your door."

"What is wanting?"

"Lodging for the night, if not longer. I know this region. I played here when I was a boy."

"Eh?"

The man of the house held his lamp closer to the other's face.

"As a boy?" said he. "Then you know something about Lost Haven?"

"Don't I?" and the eyes above the moving lips seemed to glitter. "It's not the finest place in the world, but it used to be home to me."

"Come in, then."

With a gesture of thankfulness the man entered the house and the light was placed on the table.

The tenant drew back and began to study the countenance before him. He looked his visitor over from head to foot. He had the eyes of a Jersey hawk, had this man of fifty and a scant beard and thin face.

"You resemble some one I have seen in past years," said he. "I don't often forget faces, but——"

"I'll solve the puzzle," replied the other. "I am Cletus McQuade. There you have it."

The tenant gave utterance to a sharp cry. He seemed on the eve of darting forward and seizing the visitor's hand, but he suddenly changed his mind.

"So you are old Morris McQuade's boy?" cried he. "Well, you look like your mother who is over yonder on the hill. I believe I remember you as a kid."

"Doubtless," said McQuade, with a smile. "You won't turn me off now?"

"I'd be recreant if I did," was the answer. "I once made love to your mother. But that's in the past. Perhaps she did well to marry Morris McQuade. I think she did it for the best. So you want quarters? There's a guest chamber upstairs next the roof, but it hasn't been slept in for ten years."

"I'll take it," said McQuade.

"Where's your luggage?"

"I haven't any."

"A rolling stone, eh?" laughed the man, Nathan Grane. "The world's full o' 'em."

"Call me what you please," smiled Cletus. "The tramp from the station has tired me. But I knew the old road, though there was no railroad here when I went away."

"No. The infamous thing came afterward," was the snappish retort, which showed that the speaker was not in favor of modern improvements. "It left us high and dry among the hills. This is a good place to die in."

"I don't doubt it," said McQuade. "You don't have many visitors, I suppose?"

"Not one in a whole year, though old Starry professes to keep tavern. I haven't seen a stranger in town since they found the old tramp dead over yonder by the pump. Oh, yes, you want a room. I'll call wife."

"Never mind that. Can't you show me to the room yourself?"

"Yes, but you see the kiver hasn't been turned in ten years. She'd roast me fierce if I tried it myself."

He set the lamp on the table and went into another room. Cletus heard subdued voices for a moment and then the door opened. In came a woman a fit mate for old Grane, for she looked as if she hadn't caught a glimpse of the outer world for a decade.

"Yes, it's Morris McQuade's son for all the world!" she cried the moment her gaze had alighted on Cletus's face. "I can't afford to turn him off for his mother's sake. I'll turn the kivers, Nathan. Does he want anything to eat?"

"No, I have had supper," put in McQuade. "Please don't think that I'm not able to pay. What I want is retirement."

"Lost Haven beats a graveyard for that," grinned the old man. "All the hunters in the world could never find you here."

At the man's words McQuade started visibly. "All the hunters in the world." Did he have such at his heels? And there was the owner of the black ivory box whose face he had seen at the window in Waterloo street.

He waited impatiently till the woman, coming downstairs, announced that the guest chamber was ready.

Cletus followed at her heels and was ushered into a small room with a very low ceiling and one lone couch with a toppling chair, a relic of better days beside it. The little lamp was burning on the table at the foot of the bed.

The woman said good night and went away.

McQuade looked at the lock on the door and smiled. It wouldn't keep out the weakest burglar, but who would invade the precincts of Lost Haven in expectation of booty?

He undressed as quickly as possible and threw himself among the softness of the Jersey bed. But with the starlight slipping into the room through the uncurtained window he did not fall asleep. He was far from the face in the city. He had fled like a coward. He had left a note for De Courcy saying that he had once more passed out of his life and begging that he would forget him. In that brief note he had not referred to the mysterious woman. Not a word about the black box and the will which he had engaged his friend to write.

At last the soft feathers wooed the fugitive to repose. The home of the Granes became silent. It was as if death had settled over Lost Haven and as if the cemetery on the hill had taken all its citizens to its mysterious bosom.

When McQuade opened his eyes he found the moon full in his face. The morning had not come. For a few moments he lay awake and looked out over the porch upon the nocturnal landscape which presented itself for inspection.

Then, having had a good nap, he bethought himself of his pipe and, rising, seated himself at the window for a smoke.

Just beyond the house stood the town pump, an institution of the antiquated village. He doubted not it was the same one whose handle he had used when a boy. At least it had not entirely passed out of his recollection.

All at once a figure came in sight. McQuade would have sworn that it had risen from the ground. He watched it narrowly as it approached the pump in the shadow of which it paused and turned toward the house.

Reaching for his watch he discovered that it was near daylight, though there were no signs of dawn in the drowsy east.

Then he fell to watching the figure at the pump.

What if he had been followed? What if some human wolf was on his trail? What if the woman with the strange perfume had sent this hound of mystery after him?

He had not sought the seclusion of Lost Haven unarmed. The weapon within reach he knew how to use, for on several occasions he had flashed it in the faces of Sicilian brigands, and on another occasion it had saved his life at the foot of the Himalayas.

Suddenly the figure at the pump came toward the house.

McQuade saw the dog bound forward, to retreat in an instant with his tail between his trembling legs. The man's eyes seemed to have driven all bravery out of the brute.

McQuade leaned from the window and released his revolver from the pocket.

The man was almost at the porch now.

In another moment he vanished as if the ground had swallowed him, but it had done no such service.

All at once a dark object came over the eave of the old porch.

In another instant a body followed and to McQuade's astonishment a human form lay upon the sloping roof with a face pointing toward the window.

Then it was that McQuade started and the weapon nearly fell from his hand.

He caught his breath like a drowning person and felt that his face had grown suddenly white.

"What's the use?" said he to himself. "I am doomed! There's no escape. First I find the ivory box, then I see the woman herself, and now I am face to face with the imp who was her slave in Paris. It is the devil Caliban!"

The continuation of this most extraordinary story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. It leads to very strange and fascinating situations. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

Value of Personality.

A striking personality is to many women more valuable than beauty; and to obtain this character or distinctive mark the society gentlewoman should, above all things, be her own natural self. The true woman never copies; her own manners are, if natural, sufficiently charming to make her a favorite wherever she goes.

None realize this more than the woman who is courted by society, admired by all; for it is her own personality that makes others love and respect her.

The society woman need not always be a great beauty; beauty often enough spoils a woman. As a rule, if beautiful, she is often selfish, petulant, and too self-satisfied with herself to try and please; the knowledge that she is lovely makes her indifferent, cold, and haughty, thinking her own facial charms sufficient in themselves to extort attention. She forgets that a certain fascination of manner, an individuality and distinctive characteristic of her own, is more rare, and therefore more admired and sought after than mere beauty.

What the majority of society beauties fail to cultivate is, after all, the greatest attraction in woman. The plainer woman often possesses this individuality; for she takes more pride in forming and moulding her character, lays herself out purposely to please more than her beautiful sister. For one thing, being plainer, she has to rely more upon her own efforts; she is always well-dressed and well-groomed, her colors most carefully chosen, and, often being granted an artistic eye, can so dress as to hide any plainness, and show off her good points to better advantage.

All women are not born beauties; but they can make themselves attractive by cultivating to the best of their ability each good point they possess. Every woman should make the most of herself by giving to all she undertakes the necessary and vital artistic touch. A pleasant, open, good-tempered face, a kind heart and sympathetic mind, always ennoble a soul; and that soul, shining through eyes even in the plainest face, reflects its own goodness, makes its owner the possessor of a beauty distinctly her own.

How often one hears the remark, "Miss So-and-so is not beautiful; yet she is fascinating, possesses a charm of manner which somehow enthrals you." Fascinating ways and agreeable manners can always be acquired; and they are nowadays thought as much of, if not more than, facial beauty. The woman who can be her true self without affectation; who is brave enough to think, act for herself, claims a distinct personality of her own, is both original and charming.

How often one turns in surprise and disgust from the affected, the haughty, or the simpering society woman. She is at once recognized as a nonentity; so shallow, indeed, that she possesses not a single idea of her own, but is constantly quoting other people, their ideas, plans, and opinions.

It is not those brainless, empty-headed creatures who, like parrots, repeat the words and actions of others, that take best in this life. The women who are the most admired in society—though there will, of course, always be dolls among a certain class—are those who are clever enough to possess their own charming ways, and who are not affected, though original. Such a woman delights men; entertains them by her own charm of manner.

How often we hear it said what a delightful, fascinating woman Madam Blank is; yet no one can exactly describe that charm. She is not, in fact, very beautiful, but she commands attention; she is not tall, yet dignified and graceful, and possesses somehow a distinct personality, a sweetness of manner and grace no one can describe. Yet if one looked closer, sought out for oneself the true meaning of this charm, the seeker would discover it simply consisted in being her natural, unaffected self.

Madam——is a general favorite because she never puts on airs; she is the same to all men, never assumes what she does not feel. The true society gentlewoman is a queen, in her own particular set; men respect and admire her, for she is a clever and fascinating woman, a tactful, friend, the height of good company, and considerate and solicitous for others.

Women may like and love her, but the majority envy her; they cannot, though realizing her charm, fully understand wherein lies the difference of her fascinating powers and their own, and so, trying to simulate her, fall into the error of imitation.

No one, no matter how clever a mimic, really becomes the exact counterpart of another; therefore, to imitate is only, after all, a hollow mockery and sham. Far better for each person to retain his or her own personality—make the best of their individual attractions.

Half a Conversation.

"Yassir," said the negro through the borrowed telephone. He stood on one foot in the drug store and talked in his natural voice, which made the bottles jingle on the shelves. The numerous people in the store heard all he said as a natural consequence, but could not hear the conversation at the other end. They deduced, however, from the negro's remarks that he was talking with his boss and that he was a teamster by profession.

"Yessuh," he said. "I tried dat."

"Yessuh. De ma-a-n wif de plug hat he tried dat."

"No, suh. He ain't much huht. His nose is busted."

"Yessuh. I done dat."

"No, suh. De li'l boy he ain't huht none a-tall; jes' jolted."

"Yessuh. De school teacheh. Hit to his close up some."

"Fire? Yessuh. . . . Not much, no suh."

"He moved a little bit. Yessuh."

"Yessuh. One o' de wheels wuz burnt a little."

"Two o' de wheels. Yessuh. . . . Well, suh, de wagin' hit buhned up. No suh. Dey ain't nuffin' lef'."

"De muel? Yessuh."

"He's dah yit. Yessuh."

Dolly's Version of It.

Dolly was not quite six when her mother bought a flock of nine Plymouth Rock hens and a rooster, and diligently explained to Dolly that the rooster was the "papa hen" and the rest were all "mama hens." After two or three days of confinement to accustom them to their coop, they were let out to wander about the yard, and Dolly was set to watch them. The hens staid together nicely, but the rooster showed a tendency to wander into the next door neighbor's chicken yard. Dolly chased him back time and again, until she was tired and out of patience. She turned her back for a minute, and when she looked around there were the hens up by the coop, while the rooster was sedately pacing across the garden toward the next yard.

Dolly stamped her foot on the sidewalk and screamed, "Come back here! Come back to your own family." The rooster proceeded with perfect equanimity. Dolly watched him for a moment with a look of utter disgust. Then her mother heard her say very emphatically in an undertone:

"That's just like you men, anyway."

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Zirita of Glenaspen;

Or, THE PATH OF PERIL

By Gilbert Kildare

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CHAPTER XV.

THE VEIL LIFTED.

ALFRED SEYMOUR was the only son of a wealthy Wall street merchant. His mother had died during his infancy. He was at Harvard University, and upon completing his studies there in his twenty-fourth year, his father thought that a few years spent in traveling would be advisable before taking him into the business; moreover, he wanted him to see something of the world before settling down to married life, for he had been engaged to his cousin, Annabel Loraine, for the past two years. She was an orphan, the daughter of his father's sister, and they had been reared together almost as brother and sister. Their engagement was due more in response to his father's wish than to any real love on either side. It was thus that his father made possible the most important event in his life.

He was traveling in Spain at the time. One afternoon, finding time hanging heavily on his hands, he went to see a bull fight. On his way home he came upon a band of gypsies, one of whom asked to tell his fortune. She was a very beautiful young girl of about seventeen years. He fell in love with her almost at first sight, and contrived to learn where the gypsies were going. He immediately gave himself up to following his lady-love from one city to another, until she began to take notice of him and reciprocate his affection, and he finally won her heart. At first she said marriage would be impossible, but upon being urged she at last yielded to his entreaties. But Zirita, the gypsy girl, had concealed from Alfred a very important thing which he never discovered. She had already been betrothed, according to the rites of the tribe, to the Gypsy Queen's son, Ulric. One night, long after all had retired and everything was still within the camp, she silently and tearfully bade good-by to her old life, and left it forever with Alfred. They were married quietly the following morning, and left for London, where they lived a life of Arcadian happiness in a little secluded villa in St. John's wood.

One morning, about a year later, Alfred received a cable stating that his father had been killed in a railroad accident, and bidding him come home at once. A few weeks later they arrived in New York. Alfred sold out his father's business, and purchased a little place in the country which he named "Glenaspen," where they lived, his cousin Annabel, who had forgiven him very sweetly, residing with them.

Shortly afterward a little daughter was born to them, which was given its mother's name. Zirita was passionately fond of it, and could not be away from it for a moment. Her love for her husband, too, grew day by day, and to make him happy was the one absorbing effort of her life.

Imagine his surprise, when upon going to her room one morning, he found the door open and the room unoccupied. The bed had not been disturbed. What could be the matter? His little daughter, who slept in a cradle by her mother's bedside, began to cry softly, and going to soothe her, he discovered a note pinned to her dress, addressed to himself:

"Alfred—I have left you forever. Do not attempt to find me, it will be useless. Good-by. ZIRITA."

From that day forth he was a changed man. He was never known to laugh since then, and would sit for hours with his face buried in his hands. Three years passed on, and still no word came from his wife. And so, partly to provide a mother for his orphan child, and partly to make himself forget her whom he now deemed faithless, he obtained a divorce and married Annabel. And the little Zirita grew to womanhood the image of her mother, yet ignorant of her very existence.

* * * * * * * *

But what had become of Ulric, Zirita's gypsy lover, during all this time? Could he take so deep an injury so lightly? By no means. She no sooner left than he and another gypsy, Guido, were on her trail. He arrived in London on the same train that carried her and her husband, and he was not a block away from them during their entire stay there, although neither suspected it. However, as yet he had formed no definite plan of revenge. He had stolen from his mother a treasure which the tribe had held sacred for centuries. It was an immense diamond, and had a great history which the gypsies told of in many of their songs and stories. By selling this he realized quite a fortune.

He and his companion followed Zirita to America, and he purchased an old long-disused house with an evil reputation, situated not far from Glenaspen. He gave himself the name of Armand De Bracy, and posed as a wealthy Frenchman, his friend Guido acting as one of his servants, probably to elude the gypsies, who would most undoubtedly be on their trail to recover the lost jewel.

It was not until Alfred's child was born that he found a plan for his revenge. By some means or other, probably through the gossip of his servants, he had learned of Annabel's previous engagement to Alfred; and it was said that she was not quite so forgiving as she pretended, for although she did not love him she was anxious to procure some of his wealth. So he decided that she would be useful to him.

He managed to make her acquaintance, although he was careful to keep out of Zirita's way. He finally became intimate enough with her to "sound her," as he expressed it, and was pleased to find that she bore neither of the two any good will, whatever she might pretend. At last he told her his history, and she gladly consented to help him. All he asked her to do was to secrete him in Zirita's apartments, he would do the rest, he said.

One night Zirita was alone in her room, rocking her child to sleep, when she heard a sound behind her, and a hand was laid upon her arm.

She turned around.

"Ulric!" she cried.

"Yes, Ulric," he answered. "Don't scream, I am not going to hurt you."

She was far too much frightened to scream, and could only stand looking at him fearfully.

"What do you want?" she finally asked.

"You," he answered, taking her roughly by the arm.

"Me! Let me go, let me go! I will alarm the house!"

He let go of her arm and pulled a revolver from his pocket. Stepping over to the cradle he pointed it at the child's head.

"See," he said, "if you alarm the house I will kill your child."

She flew to his side and endeavored to take the child from the cradle, but could not. He pushed her away, saying, "Be quiet and listen. I am not going to hurt either you or the child. If you do as I say neither of you will come to any harm."

"Well?"

"Have you any writing material?"

She produced a pencil and some paper from a desk near.

"Here you are."

"Now, sit down at that desk and write what I tell you."

Mechanically she obeyed.

"Write," he began.

She looked up as if to refuse, but he hissed, "Write."

"Yes."

"'Alfred!'"

Again she looked up, but only for a moment.

"'Alfred, I have left you forever——'"

She fell upon her knees in front of him.

"No, no," she cried, "not that! Not that!"

He made a movement toward the cradle, but she clutched his arm.

"I will, I will!" she sobbed.

"I thought so," he answered sarcastically. "Continue, 'I have left you forever. Do not attempt to find me, it will be useless. Good-by.' That is all; now sign it. There, give it to me."

He took it from her hand, and going over to the cradle, pinned it to the baby's dress.

"Now, put on your wraps and follow me."

She no longer refused to do his bidding, and obeyed like one in a dream.

"Come," he said.

She ran to the baby's side, and snatching it from the cradle, clasped it to her bosom in one long embrace. Then with a sob she laid it back in the cradle.

Turning to him, she said simply, "I am ready," and together they went forth into the darkness.

CHAPTER XVI.

COMING OF NEMESIS.

It was a cold winter's night, and the snow was falling thick and fast. Glenaspen's windows were aglow with light, and all seemed to be merry within. A ragged woman came slowly up the pathway, walking wearily, and every now and then pausing to rest. She finally reached one of the windows, and looked in. "Ah, how happy they seem! Any why not, why not! Ah, God is just, can He be merciful, too!"

And why should not all within be merry indeed? It was the anniversary of the marriage of Oswald and Zirita, a little over two years since Vesta's death.

De Bracy had never been captured, and since the morning of his flight Mrs. Seymour had also been missing, and, of course, the natural conclusion was that the two had fled together.

Zirita was sitting with Oswald in the parlor, thinking of Vesta, and the tears came into her eyes as she said, "Ah, how good, how noble she was!"

"Don't think of distressing things on this night, dearest," Oswald said, kissing her tears away. "I am sure Vesta is far happier now than we. Perhaps she is gazing on us at this very moment, pitying us poor mortals in her loving, unselfish way."

"What was that you were saying?" asked a low voice behind them.

She turned around and beheld a woman standing behind her. She was clad in a dark colored dress, and her figure was small and bent.

"Mother!" cried Zirita, "Come and sit beside us here by the fire. We were speaking of Vesta."

It was Zirita's real mother. The story of her insanity was partly true, but under Zirita's tender care her mind gradually became clearer till she was perfectly well again, and the happiness she felt on having her daughter restored to her almost made up for the years of suffering she had endured.

Zirita turned, and putting her arm about her mother, kissed her, saying, "Dear mother! I will try to make the remaining years of your life so peaceful that those unhappy years will seem as nothing but a dream."

Just then a servant entered.

"There is a lady at the door, who wishes to see Mrs. Astlethane," she said.

"Her name?" Zirita asked.

"She did not give it."

"And gave you no card?"

"No, ma'am."

"That's queer. Well, bring her in."

"Yes, ma'am."

A few moments later the woman entered. Her features were almost hidden by a tattered shawl, which covered her head and hung down over her face. She was clad in a ragged and dirty dress, and the shoes on her feet were broken and covered with mud.

She advanced hesitatingly, and stood with bowed head in front of them.

Zirita arose to meet her.

The woman threw back the shawl from her face. It was Mrs. Seymour!

"You!" exclaimed Zirita.

"Yes, I."

She flung herself at Zirita's feet and cried, "Oh, don't turn me out! I am ill, I am starving! It is so cold!"

She cried so piteously that Zirita was moved to pity. She raised her from the floor and drew her to the sofa. Her clothes were wet, and she was shivering.

"Come to the fire," Zirita said kindly. "You are cold."

For the first time Mrs. Seymour saw Zirita's mother.

"You!" she cried, shrinking back and putting out her arms as if to ward off a blow.

"Yes, but do not be afraid of me," she answered. "Although I am of a race that neither forgives nor forgets easily, yet I forgive you, for I see that you have been punished."

"Oh, to hear you talk like this, you, whom I have so injured! Oh, yes, I have been punished, I have, I have!"

Her face became drawn as if with the recollection of her past suffering.

"Where have you been all this time?" Zirita asked.

"I left with De Bracy. I did not want to go, but I was afraid to remain here. He treated me like a dog! We went from one country to another, as long as our means lasted, then we drifted from one gambling den to another, always fugitives from justice."

"What has become of Ulric?" asked Zirita's mother.

"He is dead—the gypsies killed him. He stole some treasure from the tribe he belonged to, and they were on his trail ever since till they finally found him."

"Then he, too, has been punished?"

"Yes, he died a most horrible death, and they tortured him in every way possible before they killed him. He was tied to a wild horse and dragged to death."

She drew her shawl about her and shuddered.

"I feel so ill!" she cried. "May I lie down for a moment?"

"Yes, lie here on the sofa and rest."

She did as she was bidden, and Zirita brought warm covering and placed it over her.

"There, now," she said, "lie there and rest. We will leave you for a while, so try to sleep. Don't distress yourself by thinking of the past. You shall stay with us now, and we will all be happy together."

"Oh, you are so good!" Mrs. Seymour answered with a sob.

The other two had left the room, and Mrs. Seymour called Zirita to her side as she was leaving.

"Dear——" she began.

"Yes, here I am."

"Would it be too much to ask you if you would——"

She broke off suddenly.

"What is it?" Zirita asked. "Certainly, I will do anything I can to add to your comfort."

"If you would only kiss me, just to show that you have forgiven me."

Zirita bent down and kissed her on the forehead.

"There," she said playfully, "that is easily done."

"Thank you, oh, so much! Now I will rest!"

She closed her eyes with a sad smile, and Zirita left the room. Half an hour later she returned. Mrs. Seymour was lying exactly in the same position, but there was a strange stillness about her.

Zirita bent over her. The same sad smile was on her lips, but there was no breath issuing from them. A nameless fear gripped her heart, and she placed her hand upon the sleeping woman's forehead. It was stone cold.

Zirita gave a sharp cry, which brought her mother and husband hurrying into the room.

"What is the matter?" they asked at once.

In answer she pointed to the sofa.

"She is dead."

"Dead!"

They stooped and felt of the body.

"Yes, she is dead," said Oswald. "She must have been very ill, and the cold and exposure killed her. Poor, unfortunate creature!"

Once more Zirita bent down and kissed her.

"May God have mercy on her soul," she said, as she reverently drew the cover over the lifeless form.

The end.

Why They Leave.

"Why do the boys leave the farm?" wails a writer in an agricultural journal.

Well, dear brother, there are several reasons. One is because the boy is not sixty-five years old at his birth. Then, if there is a hoe on the farm weighing fourteen ounces, bright as nickel plate and sharp as a razor, and another hoe weighing somewhat less than a breaking plow, with an edge on it like a hammer, and a sapling with the bark on for a handle, the hired man takes one and the boy gets the other. And any man in America knows which is the other.

Did you ever stand with such a hoe in your hands away down in a corn row on some airless, still, hot summer day, twenty acres of corn blades and tassels wilting about you, standing fourteen inches higher than your head, shutting out every last trace of breathable air, and then hear a locust down in the edge of the timber strike up his long, strident, monotonous call to make it ten times hotter? And all this time a cool creek not a mile away, loitering in deep, silent pools in shady places in the woods, or breaking into merry, dancing ripples over the pebbles? And in the deep holes, the fish just lying around waiting for a boy? Well, then, you know why some boys leave the farm.

Still boys can be kept on the farm and made to stay there all their lives. You drive a long spike through a boy's diaphragm and through a live-oak tree, and clinch or bolt it on the other side, and then saw off the boy's legs and break his back, and he will stay on the farm. Yes, there are some other ways we know, but this is the only infallible method.

Bad Break.

Mrs. Jones—A gentleman should always use cards when calling.

Mr. Jones (who enjoys a poker game, absently)—And they'd better be pretty good ones if it's a close game.

A DOCTOR'S EXPERIENCE

Medicine Not Needed in This Case.

It is hard to convince some people that coffee does them an injury! They lay their bad feelings to almost every cause but the true and unsuspected one.

But the doctor knows. His wide experience has proven to him that, to some systems, coffee is an insidious poison that undermines the health.

Ask the doctor if coffee is the cause of constipation, stomach and nervous troubles.

"I have been a coffee drinker all my life. I am now 42 years old and when taken sick two years ago with nervous prostration, the doctor said that my nervous system was broken down and that I would have to give up coffee.

"I got so weak and shaky I could not work, and reading your advertisement of Postum, I asked my grocer if he had any of it. He said, 'Yes,' and that he used it in his family and it was all it claimed to be.

"So I quit coffee and commenced to use Postum steadily and found in about two weeks' time I could sleep soundly at night and get up in the morning feeling fresh. In about two months I began to gain flesh. I weighed only 146 pounds when I commenced on Postum and now I weigh 167 and feel better than I did at 20 years of age.

"I am korking every day and sleep well at night. My two children were great coffee drinkers, but they have not drank any since Postum came into the house, and are far more healthy than they were before."

Read "The Road to Wellville," found in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

Knew the Text.

Robert Saltsman, of Erie, Penn., relates the strange church-going experience of his son.

The boy had been in the habit of going to church with his mother, but one Sunday she was unable to go and he persuaded her to let him go by himself.

Well, when he returned from the seat of gospel dispensation his mother was anxious to ascertain how closely he had paid attention. She asked him what had been the text for the sermon.

"Don't worry, you'll get the quilt," replied the boy promptly.

The mother failed to see the connection. Once more she inquired about the text, and the boy repeated his remark: "Don't worry, you'll get the quilt."

This about convinced the mother that her son was getting a little bit too fresh for so small a child, and she made up her mind to punish him. Just then she saw a friend going home from church, and she called after her to learn what the text had been.

Here's what it was: "Have no fear. The comforter will be with you."

A Chance to Make Money.

Yes, elegant free homesteads can still be had in Mexico where many Americans are now locating. You need not go to Mexico, but are required to have five acres of fruit trees planted within five years. For information address the Jantha Plantation Co., Block 593, Pittsburg, Pa. They will plant and care for your trees on shares, so you should make a thousand dollars a year. It is never hot, never cold. The health conditions are perfect.

Took Pains to Build It.

They passed a magnificent building during their travels.

"That's a fine house," said Brown to Jones, "and yet I can not bear to look at it."

"Why not?" asked Jones.

"Why?" repeated Brown. "Because the owner built it out of the aches and groans of his fellow men; out of the grief of children, and the wails of women."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Jones. "The brute! What is he—a money lender?"

"Oh, no, dear friend; he's a dentist!"

FRECKLES.

It is Easy to Remove Them.

For years I tried every known remedy without success. Skin specialists and doctors said I would take them to the grave. I fooled them all.

I cured myself by a simple discovery. I will send you the prescription free if you will write for it. It took off my freckles and the freckles of thousands of others. It will remove yours. It will clear the worst complexion. Write today. Address Mrs. E. C. White, Box 44, Dept. 1-D, Buffalo, N. Y.

Misplaced Sympathy.

"Poor little boy," said the elderly and benevolent gentleman, "did some one punch your precious little nose?"

"Ah g'wan!" said the boy. "You better save your feelin's fer yer own kid; I darn near kilt 'im!"

A Keen Woman.

Angry Wife—A telegram's been waiting for you since eight o'clock.

Startled Husband—Read it to me, my dear—hic!—I left my glasses in town.

Angry Wife (sniffing)—Yes, but you've evidently brought the contents with you.

Many Doctors Prescribe

proprietary medicines under a Latin name, charging for the written prescription three times the cost of the medicine, and do not hesitate to condemn that self-same medicine if it is advertised or mentioned by the public.

There are, however, many honest doctors who do not hesitate to openly recommend and prescribe such standard remedies as Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

A Use for Greenies.

First Reporter—How did the Daily Getthere obtain a report of the Highup-Tiptop wedding? No reporters were admitted.

Second Reporter—They sent a new man there, and he looked so scared that all the attendants mistook him for the groom.

Lords of the Ax;

Or, WHO WAS NAPOLEON KNIGHT?

By WILLIAM H. MANNING

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CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT ABOUT SHERWOOD?

SINCE Napoleon Knight became foreman he had slept in the mansion. He had a comfortable room on the second floor, and a good bed, and it seemed to be a model place to sleep, but, that night, his rest was broken. Disquieting thoughts pressed upon him.

Why had James Anderson gone so suddenly?

His old doubts of the man received new life. Anderson's sudden coming, his inquisitiveness as to the new foreman, his secretiveness as to himself—and now his abrupt departure! What did it mean?

One of the haunting ideas of Napoleon Knight's recent past assailed him anew. Had he, before his loss of memory, committed a crime, and had Anderson been there to run him down? There had been no arrest, but this might soon come.

Despite his forebodings he finally secured sleep, and morning found him in good physical condition.

There had been no change with Fergus MacBree. He continued unconscious, and was certainly badly injured, but the wisest of his attendants did not see reason for immediate alarm. Because of this, Sibyl decided to carry out her plan, and she ordered her horse and rode away to Liberty claim.

Upward of an hour afterward, Knight, busy near the mansion, saw her returning at a gallop. Something in the situation impressed him with the idea that she brought news, and when she fully arrived he was there to receive her. He scanned her face and noticed that she was under some excitement.

"Didn't they receive you courteously?" he demanded, sudden resentment in his manner.

"Yes, with perfect courtesy; but there is something to tell. Come into the house; our council must sit again."

Knight did not demur, and, a little later, he was with Sibyl and Sandy in the room where they had talked before. Blakell was not invited, and Janie had said she was busy. The late messenger still appeared to be excited.

"I rode over to Liberty," she explained, coming directly to the point, "and was politely received. Nate Wolfe met me near the door and I asked to see Sherwood. He said his boss was not well. Then I laid the Third Acre case before Wolfe and he promised that the waters of Eagle Pond should be troubled no more. That was so much gained, but, having got to that point, I told him I was there to see Sherwood, and that I would not be put off."

Napoleon leaned forward over the table.

"Well?" he questioned.

"Wolfe remonstrated, argued, delayed. I stood firm and persisted. The result was that they took me to that dark room of Asa Sherwood's!"

"Well?" cried Knight, again.

"What was Sherwood like?" demanded Sandy, eagerly.

"Wolfe opened the door and entered," proceeded Sibyl. "The housekeeper and I followed. I found myself in semi-darkness. I could just make out a man in a deep chair with pillows all about him, and a bandage over his eyes. I think he was a white man, though he may have been a negro or Indian."

"Well, anyhow, there's a man there!" exclaimed Sandy, in triumph.

"There was a man there," said Sibyl, "and he was very polite, though desperately brief, and as unreachable of manner as a king on his throne. He said that he was sorry there had been trouble in any quarter; that the digging at Eagle Pond was the work of his servants, and undertaken without his knowledge; and that he would promise me it should be dropped forever. Then he added that he hoped to live in peace with all his neighbors—that was his expression—and that's all."

"What was he like?" asked Sandy quickly.

"Like darkness. Didn't I tell you?"

"Oh! so you did."

"And," put in Knight slowly, "this man was—was Sherwood?"

"Yes. At least, so he was introduced to me by Nate Wolfe."

"Miss MacBree, you've got something back!"

"I have!" admitted Sibyl quickly. "My eyes are human eyes and I can't see in pitch darkness, but I have ears. I was within a few feet of that man—I heard him speak as plainly as you hear me now, and—do I seem sane or crazy?"

"One hundred per cent sane!" tersely replied Napoleon.

"I hope I am, still—Mr. Knight, you shall have it! The voice that told the sentiments of Asa Sherwood was the voice of James Anderson!"

Sandy leaped to his feet, astounded. Napoleon Knight sat still, his gaze devouring the girl's face.

"Anderson!" gasped Sandy, breathing hard.

"At the start," she added, "it seemed to me that the man spoke in a disguised voice, yet there was a familiarity in it. It called up memories of somebody. I wish I had caught the clew then, but the fact is I was halfway home before I got it. Understand me, I don't say the man was Anderson, but it was his voice. Yes, and his figure!"

"Say, sis!" urged Sandy explosively, "spit it right out! Do you think it was Anderson?"

"I do think so!" cried the girl quickly.

Napoleon Knight came into the conversation, his face set and his utterance deep and portentous.

"[illegible] had a spy among us!" he asserted. "From the first I suspected Anderson of duplicity. In trying to guess the secret of his game I went astray, it seems, but we've got it now. So this is the way Asa Sherwood comes to his heirship—as a spy upon us!"

"Why should he spy upon us?" asked Sibyl.

"He has been here and he knows our business secrets."

"We have never carried our lights under a bushel."

"Neither have you paraded them, I'll warrant. Even if that scoundrel has learned nothing that will enable him to injure us, it shows his nature. Bah—a spy upon us!"

The foreman rose and began walking the room. He did not seem nervous, but there was that in his manner which was infectious. Sibyl's perturbation increased and Sandy grew turbulent.

"I'll shoot the knave!" he asserted.

"No, you won't Sandy, lad!" returned his sister hurriedly. "No MacBree shall fall so low as to do violence to a human being."

"I'll do to others as they do to me!" retorted the boy.

"You'll keep the peace, brother! To do otherwise will be to give the Liberty men chance to beat us with our own weapons."

Napoleon Knight went back and forth with steady, firm steps. He betrayed no great emotion, but he was busy with his thoughts. A new idea clamored for recognition, and presently he returned to his seat.

"What," he asked slowly, "has become of the weak-eyed man at Liberty?"

Sibyl and Sandy sat silent, unable to reply to this question.

"We have had Anderson here with us," Knight went on, "and the weak-eyed man has been in the room where Anderson now is—at least, that is the claim of the opposition. If correct, where is the weak-eyed man now, and if Anderson is Sherwood, who was the weak-eyed man?"

"I have been studying on that problem," admitted Sibyl, "and—I simply am stunned!"

"Both could not be Sherwood. Unless the weak-eyed man was a myth, one of the two was a cheat and an impostor."

"Strikes me they need a sheriff over there!" cried Sandy.

"At least," said Knight, with an influx of lightness, "they need a volume on 'Who's Who at Liberty!'"

"We are most interested in what we need," said Sibyl. "It so happens that one of our kitchen servants—a very faithful girl—has a friend at Liberty. They have seen each other occasionally, though with some secrecy. I will send Mary and have her learn what she can."

The plan was acted upon. At ten o'clock that night, Mary was back. She had seen her friend, and her report was ready.

"Sarah says there has been a man in that room all along, and that she has made his bed each day, and that he is still there."

"The same man?"

"Well," replied Mary, plainly uncertain, "I didn't think of that. Sarah said the man always went into the adjoining room while his sleepingroom was put in order, so that the dust would not disturb him."

Mary had to answer more questions, but the situation was not cleared when she was dismissed and the council took up the problem anew.

"The only thing we have learned," said Knight, "is that somebody preceded Anderson in that room. We are sure of that. Now, what has become of the weak-eyed man—yes, and who was he?"

"Have they murdered him?" muttered Sandy.

"Nonsense!" cried Sibyl. "They are not so bad as that!"

It was a charitable position to take, but an idea had been presented that would not down. The MacBrees knew that nobody at Liberty had ever seen young Sherwood in the past. Now, they began to dwell upon the question—suppose that the heir had come, and had died of natural causes, or been made way with, and his place filled by an impostor?

Nate Wolfe had never been regarded with severity at Ben Nord, but he might be a wolf in fact, as well as by name. Matters at Liberty had a strange complexion.

Conversation continued until Knight saw the folly of it, and then he prepared to end the interview.

"Perhaps we had better drop this," he said. "First, we don't know positively that Anderson is at Liberty house, and, secondly, it occurs to me that we are not managing business at the rival claim. Let them attend to their own concerns. But," he added, his tone changing, "if Anderson is there he has been a spy upon us, and that means——"

He paused, hesitated, and then concluded:

"For Sherwood's sake, I hope he has never been here as a spy!"

CHAPTER IX.

GROWS MYSTERIOUS.

An hour after the council adjourned Carlos Blakell met Janie in one of the lower rooms of the mansion. She had been directing a servant in the dusting-operations so dear to the feminine heart, all the while holding her copy of Shakespeare to her heart, and she still had the volume with her. Blakell bowed deeply and smiled his best smile.

"I observe," he said, "that you were not present at the last family conclave."

"I was not invited in a proper spirit," Janie returned, pursing her lips.

"And I was not invited at all."

"Possibly they forgot, or possibly 'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad!'"

"It seems to me," pursued Blakell, a little tremor in his voice, "that, in this dire crisis, all members of the family, and all faithful friends, should be in these councils."

"'The bitted horse obeys its master's will!'" quoted Janie; and then, as Blakell did not seem clear as to the application, she added: "The horse that cannot be bitted is not taken into the fold."

"Capitally put!" cried Blakell. "Just fits the case. You and I, Miss MacBree, have minds of our own, and are not to be led like the blind. However, far be it from me to blame anybody; private ends and ambitions should be sunk in this time of distress. For one, I do not care because I was not asked to sit in conclave. But there is more!"

"There is much in 'life's fitful fever!'"

"Your father, Miss MacBree, is a sorely stricken man. It is a period when wisdom is needed from others; the management of affairs should be prudent and skillful. Is it so here?"

Janie elevated her chin and said nothing.

"Affairs are supervised by your father's younger daughter, his minor son, and his—ah! his hired man! Do not understand that I demur, or think I have right to demur, but it seems to me that custom, law, and equity demand that the entire management be vested in the eldest child!"

The grasp upon Shakespeare tightened. Janie eyed her companion more sharply. She meditated deeply; then slowly returned:

"What can I do? Sibyl and Sandy are both opposed to me, and then that—that man Knight—that hired man——"

"Can be discharged with as few words as he was engaged. I do not advocate this—far from it—but I claim that you, as eldest child, have the right to do this. Such a step, however, would place you in collision with your brother and sister, and it is to be deprecated. There is a better way."

"You have a definite idea, Mr. Blakell. Pray give it to me."

"The master of Ben Nord is stricken; he can neither act nor plan. During his incapacity there should be here one absolute head, and that head should be the eldest child. She can, I am sure, be made a legal manager by process of law. I am told that one Nettleton is a lawyer of ability at Pentland——"

"A very able man!"

"Why not summon him here, claim your rights and have yourself legally appointed and recognized?"

"Has Mr. Nettleton legal power to confer this authority upon me?"

Blakell hesitated for a moment. His knowledge of law was small, and he had a vague suspicion that his device had its weaknesses, but he swallowed his doubts and stoutly replied:

"I am sure that he has such right. How can this great property be managed except by a recognized head, and who should that head be unless it is the eldest child?"

The grasp on Shakespeare was tightened again.

"I'll do it!" declared Janie. "I will stand up for my rights—I will send a messenger bidding Mr. Nettleton come in haste!"

"But let the sending be in secret! Nobody here but ourselves must know of it."

"It shall be so. Mr. Blakell, I thank you heartily. I am a woman, and I appreciate kindness. Thank you, thank you!"

The coming of a servant interrupted at this point, but, less than an hour later, a trustworthy herder was riding rapidly toward Pentland.

Carlos Blakell felt better after that. He had taken a step to avenge what he regarded as affronts upon himself. He was rich, a member of a so-called "good family," a kneeler at the feet of society; and in the past he had been much admired because he could play polo rather successfully, ride furiously after hounds, and do fancy shooting that was really creditable.

For a time he had, he thought, been appreciated at Ben Nord, but he had lost his grip just where he ought, as he looked at it, to have made it firmer. He had gone to Liberty and ridden back and forth before the mansion, hurling a formal challenge to duel at—well, he thought Asa Sherwood was behind the lowered shades, but the report had come over from the other claim that the room had then been vacant, and he was placed in the position of one who had made himself ridiculous. He knew that the employes of MacBree grinned behind his back, and often not very secretively; and Sandy had ventured a jest on the subject. Worse than all, he knew that Sibyl felt ashamed of his course.

With the meanness of a small nature he had spurred Janie on to make trouble, and she had taken the bait with avidity.

Shortly after his interview took place a stoutly-built man came riding from the lower plain to the mansion. He was clad in coarse garments and his linen was in need of change. He was plainly a person careless as to his outward appearance, but he had a good head under his disreputable hat, and some there recognized him as Doctor Mason. The medical man arrived from Nashwell, and MacBree would now have expert attendance. The doctor's skill was well-known.

An hour later he came out to the piazza, tipped a chair back against the wall, sat down, planted one foot on the lower round, crossed his legs, thus bringing his other foot into air, and then drew forth a very short and very black clay pipe, filled it and began to smoke with great serenity.

Presently Napoleon Knight turned the corner and came near the doctor.

"I am foreman here," he explained. "I wanted to ask how you found Mr. MacBree?"

Mason gazed steadily at the questioner.

"He has concussion of the brain," was the calm reply.

"Is his condition serious?"

"With his trouble I will not say no, but he is doing surprisingly well. His amateur care has been excellent. No present cause for worry."

"His age is against him."

"Some old oxen are tough."

"I am glad that you feel hopeful," and Knight clapped his hands lightly.

"We expect to pull him through."

The doctor was still looking closely at his companion, but it was a calm, professional scrutiny that carried no offense.

"Lots of work here for somebody, with MacBree on his back," suggested the physician.

"Yes," Napoleon agreed.

"Who manages?"

"Oh! the family, and," here the foreman smiled and shrugged his shoulders, "I am consulting planner on the job and head laborer."

"The family, eh? Two girls and a boy less than twenty-one. Doesn't that throw a good deal upon you?"

"No more than I can bear. Now that Mr. MacBree is down, I am compelled to hustle a trifle more—that's all."

"Ah! Feel equal to it, I suppose?"

"I am equal to a hustle!" replied Knight, with quiet firmness.

"I see."

Neither man seemed to have more questions to ask, and Napoleon soon went his way. Directly after, Sandy came out of the house. He asked some questions, and then Mason took up the game.

"How long has that foreman of yours been with you?"

"Napoleon Knight? Oh, a few weeks."

"Good man?"

"Fine!" cried the boy enthusiastically. "Keen as a razor, and a worker from boot-heel to hat-crown."

"Is he equal to the demands of the occasion, with your father sick?"

"You bet he is! Knight is modest, and he goes through the form of consulting us children, but all the ideas come from him. He's full of them! Keen? Well, rather! And his judgment is A1. It's lucky for us that Knight has got such a level head!"

"I see!" commented Mason calmly.

In a few minutes Sandy went as Napoleon had done, whereupon the doctor puffed slowly and steadily at his pipe for five minutes,

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GENTLE JABS.

When a new girl comes to a small town all the boys sit up and take notice.

This thing isn't settled yet. Jack Johnson may not be able to pull himself away from his automobile long enough to fight.

San Francisco wants to take its drinking water from the Hetch-Hetchy. What recklessness! Water with that name could easily be sold in bottles.

Men in the American navy are chewing less tobacco than formerly, possibly having become discouraged by the absence of sidewalks on the vasty deep.

"If them socialists make good in Milwaukee," said the motorman, apropos of nothing, but showing what was in his mind, "it will be all up with a lot of these grafters in Chicago."

That couple married in Hammond, Ind., on a license fifteen years old may have taken their time about deciding and then again they may have waited until all danger of the comet was over.

Can the Pennsylvania alchemist who turned base metal into silver work a little harder at his trade and evolve a formula by which he can put Pennsylvania politicians into the furnace and transmute them into statesmen?

Sugar-trust officials who are trying to bite a large chunk out of their doubtful past and to chew it up and swallow it when no one is looking wonder if there is no way to sweeten the court or to tamper with the scales of justice as they did with the Government scales.

President Taft and the regulars who are about to lead out the lame, spavined, string-halted and wither-wrung Aldrich tariff and point to it with pride as the issue that will make the voters dance for joy in the fall campaign have probably noted a boatman gliding along in the still water just above Niagara and have imagined that happy days were just ahead for the voyager.

We now know why seedy European counts, dukes and lords have been able to marry American girls. It is because the dear creatures couldn't get American husbands. One of them who was about to marry an English lord had a narrow escape the other day when an old Indiana sweetheart came along and carried her off. Before giving up all hope and resignedly picking from the foreign offerings in the market American girls should get a job in a wholesale house where they can make their appeal by an inscription on an egg or in a cigarette package.

Fasting as a cure-all is in no danger of universal adoption, for it can be practiced only by heroic souls. Men who can resist the cry of hunger and the force of habit may see for themselves how it works. A New Yorker after trying it reports that on the eighth day his hair had quit falling out and had become darker, and that his sight and his memory had improved. This cure comes too cheap to commend itself to the average man or woman. The afflicted one wants to enjoy the luxury of being sick while recovering from some ailment. By going to the public hydrant instead of the table and by passing up all medicine and doctor's advice how is he to secure the sympathy needed to help him get well? There are some persons of so irresolute a nature that they couldn't get well if the doctor didn't tell them to. To the person who needs coaxing fasting is the wrong treatment

(Continued from page five.)

and then, with no hearer but himself, evenly remarked:

"Mighty queer!"

Unconscious of the interest he had caused in the learned mind, Napoleon Knight went about his work as usual. His grasp on the situation was complete. Standing near the mansion, Ben Nord lay like an unheaved chess-board before him. The fields and forest were the diversified surface for his "moves," and the cowboys, sheepmen, miners, farmers and lumber-jacks were the "pieces" he moved at his will. Wholly free from egotism, he was, unconsciously, perfect master of the situation. In a way, Napoleon of Ben Nord might be likened to Napoleon Bonaparte at the height of his power—his hold on all things within his province was absolute.

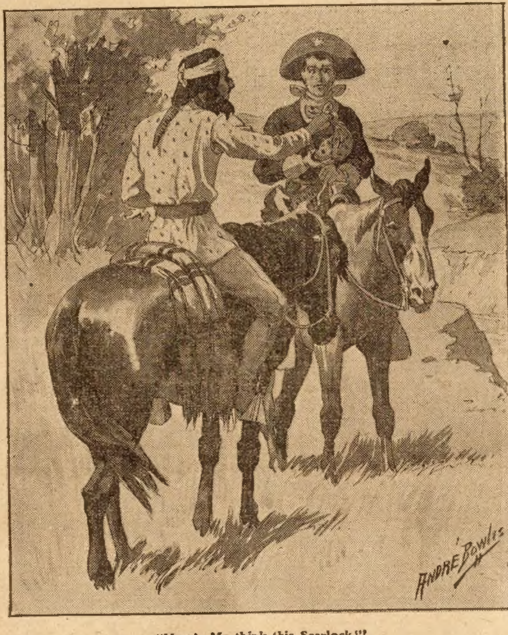
Just before night Jack Rantley came to him.

"Say, Mr. Knight, I've been over to Liberty claim," he announced.

'Have you?" the foreman returned.

"Yes. I went to see a friend of mine who is a herder. I've got news. That Asa Sherwood over there is the feller who was here as James Anderson!"

Rantley was excited, but Knight had not forgotten Sibyl's impression to the same effect. Beyond a sudden hardening of his face he showed no emotion.



"How! Me think this Scarlock!"

"How do you know?" he demanded quietly.

"The herder said so," answered Jack. "You see, I asked him if Sherwood was getting better of his weak eyes. 'Why,' says my friend, 'he's all right now; he's out of the house, and I reckon you can see him for yourself, if you want to.' With this my friend led me closer to the slope of the lot we were in, and he parted the bushes for me to look. I could almost have slung a stone to the house, we were so near; and there by the house were two men—Nate Wolfe and James Anderson."

"Well?" questioned Knight incisively.

" 'Where's Sherwood?' says I to the herder, and I'll be shot if he didn't point to Anderson. I accused him of trying a hoax, at first, but he swore by black and blue it was true; and I waited a bit and heard Anderson give orders to a mule-whacker. Fact, Mr. Knight—Anderson is there, and he is Sherwood!"

"Well, if he is that, what was he doing here?"

"That's it—what?"

"I'll tell you what, Rantley!" and Napoleon's manner suddenly grew intense and bitter, "he was here as a spy on us!"

"That's the way I figger it, sir. He came to spy on us, and he did it and got away scot-free!"

"Has he?" retorted the foreman. "Has he? We will see! I expect trickery from Liberty outfit, but such deliberate knavery is too much to be endured. It will not be endured—I am going to see Mr. Anderson, and I will have a settlement——"

"Oh! say!" interrupted Rantley, "let me go with you! We two can do the job, and we will thrash him within an inch of his life, even if all Liberty claim stands there to howl at us. Be you ready, boss?"

Napoleon stood as in hesitation.

"Or will you take some other way of squaring the account?" asked Jack.

Knight looked him in the eyes for a moment, and then turned his gaze toward the summit of Scarlock. There he saw miles of timber-land, with miles of great trees in serried files waiting to pass thousands of dollars into the hands of the axmen; but if the torch was applied when the wind blew from the south, Liberty claim would, as far as its chief asset was concerned, go to ruin.

The foreman smiled grimly and shrugged his shoulders.

"Two strokes may be better than one," he responded steadily. "For the present, however, I will content myself with seeing Sherwood in person. If you wish, come!"

CHAPTER X.

"IN HIS PLACE."

The foreman had taken two steps with a definite purpose in mind when a house-servant appeared, looking for him.

"They sent me for you, Mr. Knight," she said. "Mr. MacBree is to be moved on his bed, and Miss Sibyl is anxious you should be there."

Napoleon's thoughts quickly changed current.

"Maybe I'll see you again, Rantley," he said. "If I want you I will send for you. Lead on, Chloe!"

They went to the house, and Sibyl met them near the door.

"The doctor wants to move father somehow," she announced. "He says it will be simple, but I want somebody present who is kind-hearted, and who can be depended upon. Will you help them?"

Knight changed expression. Somehow this tribute pleased him greatly. Wrapped up in his work as he had been, he and all others there had been mere machines in his estimation. Now, he was credited with something more than ability to drive men when they worked.

"I shall be very glad, Miss Sibyl!" he replied quickly.

She added a few more words, and then he went on to the sick man's room. He seemed to tread with unusual lightness. Simple as the words had been they touched a dormant something in his nature that had long been disused. Before, he had been pleased to have his work commended; now, he was glad that he was credited with kindness and reliability. Unknown to himself, the crust of his great mental injury had been ever so lightly fractured—a ray of light pierced the darkness.

Until he reached the threshold of MacBree's room he thought of Sibyl, but when he crossed that point he was again the concentrated foreman of Ben Nord.

His duties with the patient were commonplace and soon finished. When he was free to go he did not call Jack Rantley, and his visit to Liberty claim was deferred.

The following morning there was another arrival at Ben Nord mansion, and by saddle. A slight, polished-looking man in immaculate black clothing and spotless linen, and with the white hair of nearly seventy years, drew up before the door. Doctor Mason, sitting on the piazza, recognized him as Lawyer Nettleton of the town of Pentland. The two learned gentlemen bowed to each other, but spoke no word. They resided within twenty miles of each other, but were not on good terms.

When his horse was in the care of a hostler and himself attended to by a domestic, Mr. Nettleton asked to see Miss Janie MacBree. She soon came to the sittingroom with Shakespeare under her arm, but when she had greeted the gentleman from Pentland she shifted the more distinguished Avon notable to her heart.

Mr. Nettleton had met Miss Janie a few times previously, and they now had some formal conversation as an opening, but the fair heart back of Shakespeare was palpitating with a sense of undeserved wrong, and she finally poured out her sorrows.

Her father was ill, and whereas, as she looked at it, she, the eldest child, should be permitted to manage the business of Ben Nord, she was unfeelingly made the inferior of her younger sister and her brother; and, worse yet, was as nothing to her father's hired man.

Could Mr. Nettleton duly appoint her sole manager of Ben Nord?

A faint smile moved the lawyer's face, and it betrayed more amusement than sympathy.

"My dear young lady," he replied, "I regret to say that I lack the power. What you desire is wholly out of my province."

"Then who can appoint me?" she cried shrilly.

"Were such an appointment made, it would be done by a judge of probate."

"Who is he?"

"I have once more to disappoint you. Even a judge would not act in this case. If your father was incapacitated by chronic mental trouble—if he suffered from disordered mind due to old age, or any like cause—the judge would on proper petition, appoint a guardian. In that case, I am sure, he would favorably consider you, Miss Janie, for your abilities cannot be doubted——"

"Is father not incapacitated?" she demanded. "Why, he is wholly unconscious, and he may die!"

"The law, I am sorry to say, takes no heed of such cases as his. Before his injury he was in perfect mental condition. His injury is one that will be of short duration. If he recovers he will again be able to perform his own duties. No judge would appoint a guardian for one thus laid low."

"But father may not recover; he may die!"

"In that contingency his estate will be taken in charge by the executor, if he has made a will, or by the administrator, if there be no will. Really, I feel for you, Miss Janie, but the law will not help in this case!"

Miss MacBree drew Shakespeare closer to her heart, and with an air of high tragedy.

"Et tu, Brute!" she exclaimed, somewhat obscurely; and then, throwing her head back, she added: " 'This hand to tyrants ever sworn the foe!' "

"There is yet another point," added Mr. Nettleton. "Nobody knows positively whether Scarlock Mountain, your father's residence, is in California or Oregon. The mat-

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ter would have to be determined before action could be taken—if action were possible—and, before the tedious length of law had dragged itself through the courts, your father would long have recovered health."

"'Man, proud man, dressed in a little brief authority,'" quoted the lady; "how does he and his laws afflict the feebler sex; 'Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!'"

Baffled though she was in her hopes, Miss Janie felt better after this erudite expression of her sentiments. Mr. Nettleton advised that she refrain from mentioning what she had planned to her relatives, but she had already done this, so his inclination toward family harmony was frustrated.

The lawyer made his stay short, and, seeing nobody but Janie of the sick man's children, jogged away down the mountain as he had come.

During the next two days Fergus MacBree held his own well. Doctor Mason did not quit the field of battle, and his attention, though quiet, was unremitting and skillful. Sibyl was proving herself a model nurse, and the stricken lord of the ax, though unconscious of the fact, was receiving the best of care.

Zealous as Mason was he found much leisure on his hands, and his favorite recreation seemed to be conversation with Napoleon Knight. They were the two best educated men on Ben Nord, and, drawn together by this fact, they mutually enjoyed their periods together. After a time it dawned upon the foreman that he was under professional analysis, but his fancy for Mason led him to accept this with pleasure, rather than resentment. Under such conditions it was inevitable that an understanding should come, and come it did.

Conversation led up to the point, and soon the doctor was in possession of Napoleon's story, as far as the foreman himself knew it.

Mason listened calmly and smoked his black pipe deliberately.

"Don't be vexed," he then requested, "but I knew from the start that all was not well with you. You are bright and keen—not as a compliment, but as a business remark, I'll add that you are mighty keen—but I knew there was something missing in your mental equipment; and I suspected that it was of long standing. Now, we are in thick of an interesting conflict."

"Very thick!" said Knight, sighing.

"Your first recollections are of a wagon, horses, two men——"

"And a red crescent!" interrupted Napoleon.

"That red crescent puzzles me!" declared Mason. "How can it have connection with two men traveling the plains with a wagon-outfit? Surely, they had no flag waving aloft, and as for a badge on their coats—why, a sick man would hardly notice such a triviality. But we will pass the crescent by. Another peculiarity: You remember that there were two men whose real names are gone from you, but, strangely enough, you recall that they were known by the nicknames of 'Slap' and 'Shrug?'"

"Yes."

"Do you realize that you, at present, both shrug your shoulders and clap your hands?"

"No—yes! That is, I have caught myself doing both, but——"

Knight stopped, and the doctor took up the conversation anew.

"Now, in view of this, is it not possible that, instead of two men, you were the only one? What I mean is, didn't you do these two things formerly, and were you not known as 'Slap' and 'Shrug?'"

"I can't remember it that way."

"You may be right. The nickname would be long for one man in this straightforward region. Then the Napoleon part—what about that?"

"No use, doctor! I can't grasp it."

"Well, would it not be well for you to travel over the country, within a radius of say fifty miles, hunting for somebody who can identify you? That wagon certainly did not carry you an immense distance. Then, again, you might find the wagon."

"But should I know it, or know the men? I fear not. Still, I have already decided that, as soon as Mr. MacBree is well, I shall undertake just that journey."

"Do it—something may come of it. Now, as to your injury. I would like to examine your head."

It was done, and Mason made his report.

"I am sure there is no depressed bone, and, as a result, I fear a surgical operation would not relieve you. Although your wound is, of course, the direct cause of your loss of memory, I think that shock was largely a contributory cause. If you could be where the affair happened, and see what you last saw, or a part of it—well, it might be your memory would come back with a rush. Your case baffles me; I admit that; but there is nothing too strange in mental disorders to be possible. It may be——"

Napoleon made a sudden, half-frightened start.

"What's the trouble?" asked Mason.

"The bray of that confounded mule!"

"I heard it bray, but what of it?"

"I don't know why it is, but every time I hear the sound—we have several here—it sets my nerves to quivering."

"Ah! A rugged man startled by the bray of a mule! Heredity? Or a contributory cause of—it's obscure!"

The doctor drew at his pipe slowly and placidly, his keen gaze still on his companion. Napoleon Knight, not then the alert foreman, but a passive patient with his medical adviser, waited for more, but Mason had reached a point where he wanted to think. When he had smoked his pipe to the ashes he knocked the bowl on his boot-heel.

"Knight," he then added, "I must go to MacBree now, but we will talk again. A word before I go. While MacBree is sick you are absolute master of Ben Nord, are you not?"

"Why, no!" exclaimed Napoleon. "His children are masters of all. Still—well, the business is run by me—in a way!"

"To be plain, you are absolute boss here. Now, my good sir, I've seen that you are a very resolute boss—a militant boss, so to speak. You run affairs here with tremendous energy."

"As to that, I do want Ben Nord to prosper——"

"And Liberty claim to go downhill?"

Napoleon set his teeth tightly, hesitated, and then curtly replied:

"The two concerns are rivals. I am here to lift Ben Nord up. If need comes, Liberty claim must go down!"

"Even if it necessary to set the fire on the mountain top that will sweep the Liberty timber away and ruin your rivals?"

The foreman's eyes glittered.

"If those other fellows use us well they will be used well, but if they press mean tricks upon us"—he paused and looked at the top of Scarlock—"it may come to that!"

Mason shook his head. He knew that Knight's tremendous energy was more than natural; that his devotion to Ben Nord and his antipathy to Liberty were excessive, and that, on the whole, his rivalry was a monomania due to his mental affliction. The doctor was positive that, in his right mind, his companion was light-hearted, considerate and charitable. Hatred of Liberty claim was the one evidence of his brain-disorder, and it overmastered him.

"Wait a bit!" urged the doctor mildly. "Let me ask you to grasp one possibility firmly. Put yourself in the place of your rivals over yonder. Imagine that you are Asa Sherwood!"

"Well?" replied Napoleon, unmoved.

"Liberty is his property, his source of revenue, his idol, his——"

"Let them use us well!" cried Napoleon.

"Gently, my good friend! I beg of you, try my advice again. Imagine that you are Asa Sherwood!"

"That scoundrel—pah!"

"Steady, Knight! If you were he in the sense that I mean, you would not have his ways. Look at it resolutely—try to be Sherwood! If you were he you would set great store by Liberty, and want to see it prosper. Liberty claim would then be your idol——"

"I can't imagine such a thing!" declared the foreman energetically.

"Well," replied Mason, rising, "we will drop it for now, but take my advice—don't be too severe with Liberty claim!"

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT THE INDIAN BROUGHT.

The next few days saw several minor incidents. First of all, Doctor Mason, finding that his patient was doing well, returned to his own home to give attention to those who were in need of his services there, but he left with a promise to return shortly.

Knight had not carried out his threat to visit Sherwood, alias James Anderson, but Sandy MacBree had happened on him with the divisional fence between them and freely expressed his sentiments. Anderson was riding about to oversee his affairs, and not looking anything like an invalid. Sandy berated him soundly, but Anderson was mild and patient, and defended himself from the charge of being a spy by claiming that he came first to Ben Nord, and under a false name, to scan his own property at a distance, and see if his hands were doing right. The excuse was regarded at Ben Nord as puerile.

Next and most important, the gossip that trickled from Liberty to Ben Nord had made it clear that the weak-eyed man had been no myth, or, at least, it was averred by the servants in Liberty mansion that a man really had occupied the darkened room.

As Knight, Sibyl and Sandy knew that Anderson had been at Ben Nord at that time, the old problem grew more pressing—who had been the weak-eyed man, and what had become of him?

Was he the genuine Sherwood—had he died of disease or been put out of the way by Nate Wolfe, and Anderson been thrust forward as a bogus Sherwood?

It was felt that the law should have matters at Liberty under investigation, and that somebody should be punished if murder had been done there. At least, so Sibyl and Sandy said, but when this feature of the mystery was considered, Napoleon Knight shrugged his shoulders with supreme indifference.

"But," urged Sandy, "it would be tough on Asa Sherwood if he came to his new estate and was made way with immediately after!"

"For my part," returned Napoleon, "I don't care a rap for Asa Sherwood!"

There was impatience in his manner, and he plainly preferred that the new heir on the other side of the boundary fence be not mentioned in his hearing, but Asa Sherwood and his fortunes seemed inclined to haunt the foreman of Ben Nord.

The following day he was riding near the foot of the mountain when a tall, slender man who was clearly of unmixed Indian blood suddenly trotted into sight and accosted him.

"How! Me think this Scarlock!" said the red-man abruptly.

"That's right," agreed Knight.

"Me on long journey. Meet white miner ten, twenty, fifty miles 'way back. He go that way, I go this. Give me this and say, take it to you. Here! It is yours. I go!"

The Indian turned, struck into his former trot and began receding like one intent on business.

Napoleon held in his hand a soiled red pocket-handkerchief. Its corners were drawn together and knotted tightly—so tightly that, when the wondering foreman essayed to open the parcel, he met with prolonged difficulty. Finally he succeeded, and, as the fabric fell apart, he found it held several papers. He scanned them, and his expression changed suddenly. One by one he glanced at them, and his composure was perceptibly shaken. His eyes grew larger, wider, and his lips parted. A dizziness came upon him. Thinking that he might fall, he slid from his horse and sat down upon a stone. He rubbed his head for a moment and looked strangely at the papers, which had fallen by his side. Presently he picked them up, surveying them now more calmly.

"A mistake!" he murmured. "They are for Asa Sherwood!"

He handled them one by one. The first was a letter. Addressed to Sherwood, it was signed J. Q. Nettleton, and dated at Pentland. The other documents were memoranda as to the Liberty claim property—its estimated wealth in lumber, and its flocks and herds and other things.

The former dizziness returned to Napoleon. It was not that he seemed to remember them, but that they exerted a strong, strange influence upon him—an influence almost weird. He could not account for it, but it disturbed him. He made no attempt to read in detail, and had no business interest as to the wealth of Liberty claim as thus revealed, but he saw enough, without intending it, to be singularly perturbed.

Unsuspected by him, memory was seeking to cast off its shackles.

Presently he grew angry. He resented the influence of these things, and was tempted to throw them away and ride on, but a sense of honor restrained him and he realized that he had a duty to perform.

"They were Sherwood's!" he muttered. "They may be of value to him. He shall have them!"

All mental confusion was now gone; he was again the vigilant business man, and he thrust the documents into his pocket, leaped to the saddle of his horse and went galloping toward Liberty mansion. Remembering the Indian, a little later, he looked for him, but he had disappeared.

Fifteen minutes after, Knight arrived at Liberty residence and found Anderson on the piazza. The latter looked disconcerted, but Napoleon tried hard to keep in his mind the advice he had received not to have any altercation with the new heir, and, choking down an inclination to take him to task, came to the point without delay.

"Mr. Sherwood, I have something for you. Half an hour ago I was riding near the foot of the mountain when I was accosted by an Indian. He stated that he had a parcel for me, gave me this and departed at once. Examination showed me that he had made a mistake. The parcel is yours, not mine!"

With this he passed the documents over.

"Thank you for your trouble, Mr. Knight!" replied Anderson, recovering his self-possession. "It was very kind of you. Pray wait a bit until I have examined—why, this letter is dated some weeks back——"

Anderson was looking at the papers as if they were wholly unfamiliar to him, seeking to take in their contents. Clearly, he had expected nothing like this when he asked Knight to linger, and, now, he was too much absorbed to remember that if he dismissed the caller he could scan the documents unseen. He was surprised, or so it seemed; and he certainly was perplexed and agitated.

Napoleon, watching his companion, smiled grimly.

"Mr. Sherwood, you don't seem glad to get your property!" he commented, shrugging his shoulders.

"Why, I—of course I am glad—but these are of old date, and—I am greatly obliged, for they are——"

His voice dwindled away, and the Ben Nord foreman clapped his hands lightly, as if enjoying his perturbation.

"Well, what?" he asked, with a trace of malice.

Anderson turned his gaze upon the horseman, revealing his troubled face more plainly, and then brushed his palm nervously across his forehead. If appearances were reliable, he made an effort to rally, and he surely became more like himself.

"These are not new!" he said.

"Is it not possible that, like a poor woman's dress, they can be made over?" Knight asked sarcastically.

"Very good, sir, very good! Humorously put! Well, I am greatly obliged to you."

"I can see, Mr. Sherwood, that you are glad to get them."

Anderson had dropped his gaze to the documents, which he was holding as if afraid they might bite him, but, now, he again looked at the foreman.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, that you are glad to get them!"

"Oh! yes, certainly; of course. Well, that's quite true, and—and I thank you!"

Anderson was aware that he was making himself ridiculous, and he was angry that it should be so, but he had, for reasons best known to himself, gone adrift from his moorings.

Napoleon was taking malicious pleasure in his discomposure, but Anderson abruptly rallied and his brains took him out of his singular mood. Why should a man be embarrassed at recovering his own lost property? Clearly, there was no reason, and he took the case in hand coolly now, and the interview closed with him master of himself. With fresh thanks for company, Napoleon rode homeward. For a time he felt amusement in recalling his late companion's manner, but his mood changed.

"He gave his documents a mighty queer reception!" the foreman muttered. "He was frightened. By Jupiter! that man is not Asa Sherwood! He is an impostor! Now, where is the weak-eyed man? There has been dark work at Liberty mansion!"

He rode on debating whether duty required him to notify the proper officers of law, and bring about an investigation, but the point was not decided when he arrived at Ben Nord.

Reaching there, he took up his regular duties with his usual concentration. It was two hours later when a horseman arrived. He was a man of advanced years and rather distinguished appearance, being clad in black outer garments and irreproachable linen. He came directly to the foreman.

"Mr. Knight, I think?" he began calmly.

"That's my name, sir," Napoleon answered.

"I am J. Q. Nettleton, a lawyer whose home is at Pentland. Also, I am attorney to Asa Sherwood."

"Ah!"

"You brought him certain papers, today. May I ask where you got them?"

"As I told Sherwood, from an Indian," Napoleon answered.

"Where is that Indian now?" drily asked Mr. Nettleton.

(Continued on page fourteen.)

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Don't Mention It.

The politest man in Boston collided violently with another man on the street. The second man was angry.

"My dear sir," said the polite one with a bow, "I don't know which of us is to blame for this encounter. If I ran into you, I beg your pardon; if you ran into me, don't mention it."

Probably Criss-Cross.

Miss Wantim (coyly)—I hope when you were reading my letter that you read between the lines?

Mr. Notcarin (indifferently)—That was a physical impossibility.

Looking Cityward.

Western Magistrate—You are charged, sir, with killing six of our oldest and most respected citizens. What have you to say?

Prisoner—They were all of 'em rich old pennygrabbers wot was leavin' the best buildin' sites in town lie idle, waitin' fer a higher price.

"Well?"

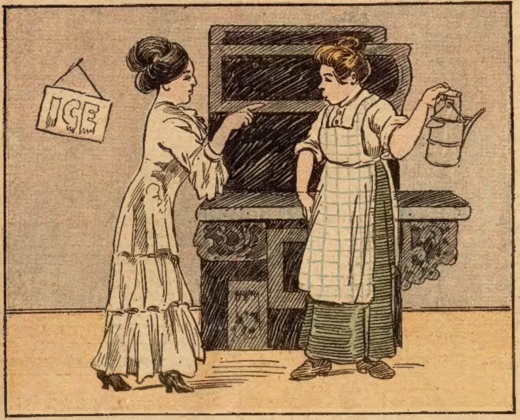
"Well, yer Honor, I belong to the village improvement society."

To Be Expected.

"Mrs. Nervey wasn't invited to Mrs. Swellman's tea at all," Miss Gaddie was saying, "but she came, and when she entered the room the silence was positively painful."

"Naturally," remarked the hateful Mr. Knox. "Silence is always painful among women."

SHE KNEW.



The Missus—If I catch you using coal oil again to light the fire with I shall discharge you!

The Maid—Well, mum, come to think of it, there ain't much difference between a discharge and an explosion.

The Latest Styles, Too.

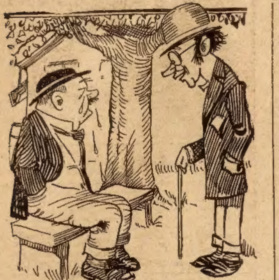
"Simpkins must be well fixed."

"What makes you think so?"

"He has a pair of suspenders for each pair of trousers."

"That's nothing! I know a man who has three perfectly good derby hats."

Astronomy.



Hewitt—Did you see stars when your wife hit you over the head?

Jewitt—Yes; but it was to be expected.

Hewitt—What do you mean?

Jewett—She used the big dipper.

Hard Lines.

Whiffers—You look all worn out.

Riffers—I'm most dead. Had about forty letters to write this afternoon.

"Why didn't you dictate them?"

"No typewriter."

"What's become of her?"

"I married her."

"Get another."

"Can't."

"Why not?"

"Costs too much to live now."

A Practical Proof.

"Do you take any stock in Ralph Waldo Emerson's theory of compensation?" asked the philosopher.

"I should say I do," replied the crusty-looking man. "I've just come from the dentist's, where I had my teeth filled and pockets emptied."

When He Stopped.

Stubb—Did you ever try to count a thousand sheep and fall asleep?

Penn—No, but I sat back of my wife at a concert one time and counted four hundred and eighty-nine buttons on her gown and fell asleep.

The Little Darlings.

Mrs. De Mover—Sakes alive! This is the noisiest neighborhood I ever got into. Just hear those children screech.

Maid—They're your own children, mum.

Mrs. De Mover—Are they? How the little darlings are enjoying themselves!

The Honest Grafter.

Gyer—There goes an honest grafter.

Myer—The idea! How can a grafter be honest?

Gyer—By confining his operations to trees and shrubs.

Up to Date.

Houser—Say, old man, the wires in those fly screens you are putting in your house seem to be a long way apart; they look to me as if an elephant could almost get between them.

Aernor—Oh, they're all right for their purpose. I'm putting them in to keep out flying machines.

His Objection.

"Do you favor the 'fast' cure?" asked the young medical student who had been perusing one of the marvelous cure stories.

"I do not," snorted the old doctor. "I look at things from a practical, money-making standpoint and favor a slow cure every time."

Money and the Man.

"Money," remarked the moralizer, "does not make the man."

"True," rejoined the demoralizer, "but a little thing like that doesn't worry the man who makes the money."

Always Prepared.

Mrs. Neighbors—I understand your husband is a versatile man.

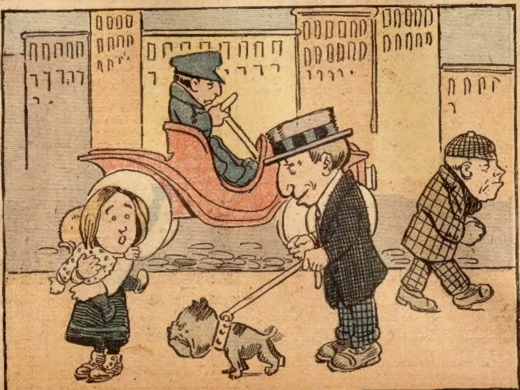
Mrs. Newcome—Yes, indeed. Why, he has a new hard-luck story ready every time I ask him for money.

From Pa's Point of View.

Little Willie—Say pa, what is a financier?

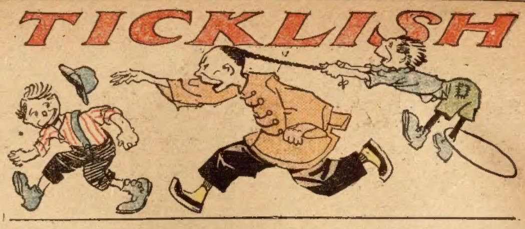
Pa—A financier, my son, is a man who can separate other people from their money without the aid of a sandbag.

OTHER END.



The Man—He won't hurt you, little girl. See, he's wagging his tail.

The Girl—Yes; I kin see dat all right; but dat ain't de end I'm scared of.



Certainly Innocent.

Jinks—I see by the paper that your friend Bloomer, of Bloomville, has got into trouble.

Winks—What's he done?

"Embezzled the funds of the church."

"That must have been some other Bloomer. The Bloomer I knew didn't go to church."

He Had None.

Mrs. Recentmarrie—I want half a dozen red lemons.

The Fruiterer—Red lemons?

Mrs. Recentmarrie—Yes, sir, I want to surprise my husband by making him some red lemonade.

They Liked It.

Seymour—How did your ducks like the new runway you put up outside of their coop?

Ashley—All right; they they came out flat-footed for it.

What He Needed.

An excited citizen burst into the police station. "My life is in danger!" he cried. "I've just received a threatening letter from the 'black hand,' and I want a permit to carry a weapon!"

"All right, sir," replied the captain. "I'll give you a permit to carry a fan—that's the weapon you need; something that will keep you cool."

A Forgetful Spouse.

Mrs. Bilkins—I never saw such a forgetful man in my life as you are. The clock has stopped again.

Mr. Bilkins—That's because you forgot to wind it.

Mrs. Bilkins—Huh! You know very well, Mr. Bilkins, that I told you to remind me to wind it and you forgot about it.

The Market Dull.

De Broker—Why is it that the stock market is so fearfully dull?

De Curbb—Um—I believe most of the bank officials, city treasurers and confidential clerks who have been speculating in stocks are locked up.

Oh, You Chantecler!

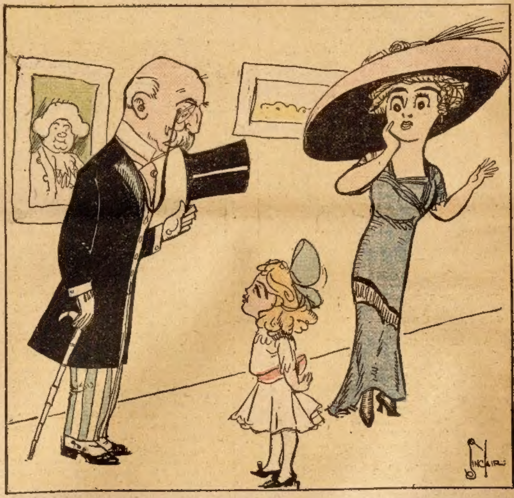
Mrs. John—I see where fourteen men were arrested for chicken stealing.

Mr. John—Blame it on Paris, blame it on Paris.

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

The ox-eyed maids of other days
  Were beautiful, I trow,
But could they reach the peroxide
  Beauties we have now?

COACHED BY HER MOTHER.



(Mama has told Elsie, "If the duke speaks to you, be sure to say 'Your Grace'.")

The Duke—Well, little girl, and what's your name?

Elsie—For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful, it's Elsie.

Moving.

Seymour—It seems as if the Smiths were moving all the time. They have moved three times already this year.

Ashley—Oh, the Schanger family beat that record. They are on the move so much that they think of going to housekeeping in a moving van.

Making Business.

Spectal—Dr. Cyter, the eye specialist, must be hard up for patients.

Bifols—What makes you think that?

Spectal—Why, his wife goes downtown every afternoon and promenades through the crowds with her hat porcupined with hatpins.

A Great Success.

Stranger—I understand that electrocution is a great success in this State?

New Yorker—Yes, indeed. When a man wants to die a quick, painless and delightful death, all he has to do is to go out and kill somebody. We do the rest.

She Had the Price.

In vain they told the heiress that the duke was an impostor and worse. "Why," said a friend, "I have read there is a price upon his head." But the heiress, all serene, only answered: "I have the price!"

Horsefly Optimism.

First Horsefly—What's the matter, Buzz? Why are you feeling so happy?

Second Horsefly—I'm thinking how fortunate it is for us that a horse's tail can't wag as fast as a dog's.

Her Insinuation.

Mr. Lafters (with a sniff)—I don't se how you can call this stuff "angel food" it would punish an angel to eat it.

Mrs. Lafters (coldly)—There are good an bad angels, Henry.

Teaching a Lesson.

As the car swung sharply around from Shaker street not a man arose to offer his seat to a handsomely gowned woman who was clinging desperately to one of the straps.. Whereupon Mrs. Kyckers, who was sitting next her husband, exclaimed, indignantly, "I think it is just shameful for all you men to stay seated and make that poor woman stand!"

Mr. Kyckers was not impressed. "Do you know who that woman is?" he asked.

"No," his wife retorted, "I don't know who she is; and it doesn't make any difference who she is; she's a woman, and ought to be treated with decency."

Mr. Kyckers spoke patiently, "My dear," he said, "she is the wife of the trolley company's president."

His Claim to Prominence.

At a social gathering a certain man, intent on knowing every one, was introduced to Senator Julius C. Burrows of Michigan.

"The name Burrows is very familiar to me," he said. "I am certain that you are a man of some prominence."

"Yes," replied Senator Burrows, "I am the man that 'died at first' just before Casey came to bat in that celebrated ball game at Mudville."

She Knew Him.

"I hope you will be interested in yonder gentleman," said the hostess. "I have assigned him to take you out to dinner."

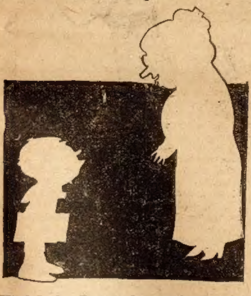
"I shall be," responded the lady addressed. "That gentleman was formerly my husband, and he's behind with his alimony."

Method in His Madness.

She—But you do write a wretched hand. Why, I don't think I can read one-half of any one of your letters.

He—I know it. I do that so they never can be used in court.

No Hope.



Kind Lady—Do you know who I am, little man?

Kid—Gee! Don't yer know who yer are?

As in Laundries.

A California woman, in training a new Chinese servant to wait on the door, had her daughter ring the bell and present her card. Next afternoon a friend called and handed her card to the Celestial, who pulled out of his sleeve the card the daughter of the house had presented the afternoon before and carefully compared the two.

"Tickee no matchee," he exclaimed, handing back the visitor's card. "No can come in."

Sprouting Up.

"Don't you think, Mary, you are too old to play with the boys?"

"No, mamma; the older I get, the better I like them."

Light Lunch.

"Say, how much of that cheese did you eat, old man?" queried the housefly.

"The hole of it," replied the skipper.

Scaring the Young Orators.

"The boy who stood on the burning deck was a brave lad."

"Yes," replied the school-teacher; "he doesn't appear to have been nearly so scared as some of the boys who have since been called on to recite about him."

His One Good Trait.

Jones—Whenever I have to borrow money I try to get it from a pessimist.

Brown—Why?

Jones—A pessimist never expects to get it back.

Needed Now.

Mrs. Stubb (reading)—In ancient cities the walls between the houses were often fifty feet high.

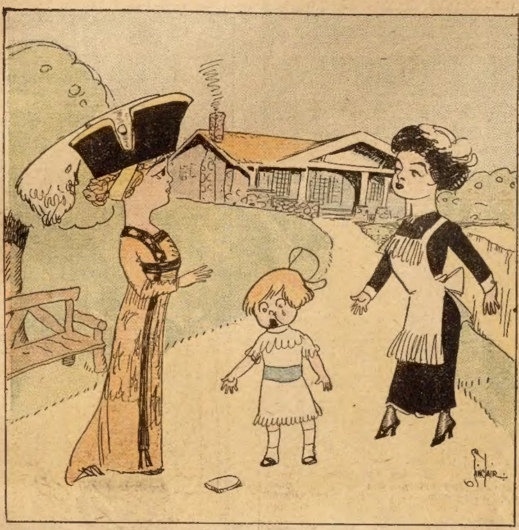
Mr. Stubb—What a grand scheme to prevent back-yard gossiping.

What Was Suggestive.

Ives—There's nothing pertaining to Mrs. Rhulers that is suggestive of meekness.

Beers—What about her husband?

EXPECTING MUCH.



Little Elsie (weeping)—Mama, my bread and butter has fallen again, the buttered side down!

Mother (to the maid)—Why do you always butter the bread on the wrong side? Butter it on the upper side hereafter!

Wrong in the Counting.

Edith—How many times did Ed kiss you last night, Ethel?

Ethel—I told him he might kiss me twice, but he acted as if he had never learned a single thing about mathematics.

Strength in Union.

Wisebrook—Puffer is in the hospital now because he persisted in playing his cornet against the protests of his neighbors.

Rivers—What happened?

Wisebrook—His neighbors clubbed together.

Matter of Profit.

"Now, my friend," said the M. D., as he was leaving the sickroom, "I hope you will profit by my advice."

"I would, doctor," replied the patient feebly, "if I got $3 a visit for giving it, like you."

When and Where She Looks.

"When a woman wants a husband she doesn't go looking in a club house for one," shouted the suffragette.

"No, not unless she's married," answered a sister in the back seat.

Going Too Far.

"Some lovers are very extravagant in their talk."

"To be sure."

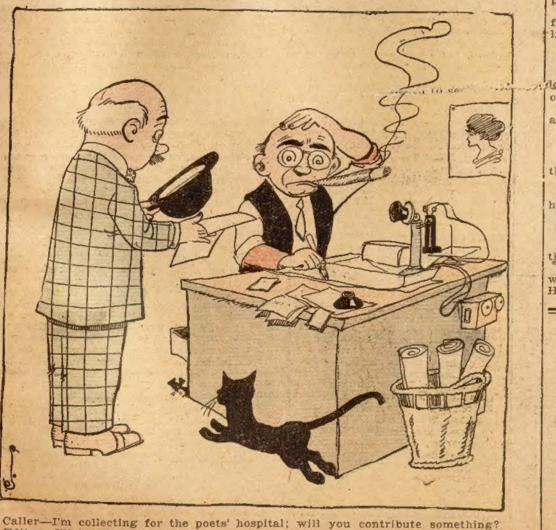
"A young scientist declares he wishes he were a germ upon his lady's lip."

A Reflection on Her Product.

Mrs. DeVisitte—You don't mean to say that your splendid cook has left you?

Mrs. Holmes—Yes; the sensitive thing was offended because the doctor said Mr. Holmes had indigestion.

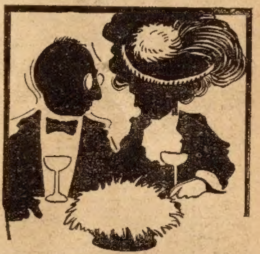
OBLIGING.



Caller—I'm collecting for the poets' hospital; will you contribute something?

Editor—I'll be glad to; come around tonight with an ambulance and I'll have ome poets ready.

In a Restaurant.



Gerald—How would you like plain lobster?

Geraldine—This is so sudden.

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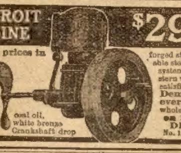

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Gold-Locks Joe

By Bertha Seavey Saunier.

"OH, THE world is full of roses'—say it, Joey," came a droning voice from the dusty floor of the dingy doorway.

Joey's babyish treble halted obediently over the words. That is, he obeyed with a vague and halting understanding of what "roses" might be, and of what the place called "the world" might be, for Joe's brief life of three years had been bounded by the four smoky walls of his miner father's home through whose smudgy poverty his brightly shining head and cherub face had gleamed as the only flower that seemed able to bloom in such discouraging circumstances. As for roses, they were quite beyond the pale of Smoky Town's hot and dusty and cinder-strewn streets and yards, and so quite beyond the ken of Gold-locks Joey, or, for that matter, of Johnnie himself, who was trying to teach the lines that he had learned from the blackboard at school to his small disciple.

" 'Oh, the world is full of roses,
And the roses full of dew,
And the dew is full of heavenly love,
That drips for me and you,'—that's all of it, Gold-locks, and you must learn to say it," Johnnie urged, putting his hands together for a cushion for his head as he lay back and gazed at the smoke-dimmed ceiling.

"Yes," Joey answered, putting his own bright head close to Johnnie's. He was eager to do anything to please Johnnie, who was twelve and quite grown up. He was a man, in fact, from Joey's point of view, now that he had left school and had gone to work with father and big brother Jim in the dark and fearsome place under the ground, a place of mystery and of dread that called for only strong and brave hearts to enter therein. Thus Johnnie was become a hero—and mother cried each morning when he started off with his dinner pail and tiny lantern, a fact which troubled Joey not a little. In a vague way Joey connected his mother's tears with the general air of hatred and of dread for a certain person known as the Magnate, who was also called the Coal King—the hate-tainted air which he had breathed since birth. All the children in the narrow streets had breathed the same tainted air which was threatening to poison even the sweetness of Joey's mind and nature. Like the smoke-tainted air, which was become an unconscious fact, the children were infected with the ever resurgent question, "Do you hate the Magnate?" and the answer came in whispered chorus, "Of course we do!" which, if overheard, was silenced in fear and trembling by their prudent and oppressed guardian elders. But the phrase had early stuck in Joey's active little mind. It was of more pointed interest to him than lines about unknown things called "roses" and "dew" and "heavenly love," and so on. So Gold-locks Joey snuggled his soiled and cherub face close to Johnnie's, which showed lines of want and a look of hardness, and whispered:

"Do you hate the Magni?"

Surprised out of his lazy attitude Johnnie sat up and glanced at the form of his mother busily preparing their Sunday meal. He nodded a silent assent, still staring at his baby brother in mute dismay, which dismay, however, his own too childish mind was not able to understand.

"When I am grown big I can go with you to the mine—can't I Johnnie? and we will have good times together in the mine," Joey prattled.

"Oh, no, Goldy-locks, never. You must never go to work in the mine," Johnnie protested lovingly, as if shuddering at the bare prospect.

"Why, can't I go?"

Johnnie hid his sore and swollen hands in his pockets as mother came to the doorway, and pursed his lips in cheerful whistling.

"Why, can't I go, Johnnie?" the child persisted.

"Because you must go to school and learn a great many things and get more money than anybody who works in the mine, Joey."

But this plan was too doubtful to Joey's unschooled thoughts.

"Why can't I go to the mine?" Joey urged.

"Because, Goldy-locks, it is a very bad place—very bad—there's no light there, at all, Joey, only tiny specks of light that the men wear on their hats that just prick through the black darkness, and the walls are all wet and there's water on the floor, and bad smells come to everybody, and the rats run about everywhere, big, black-looking fellows they are, and the sun can never shine anywhere in the mine."

"They have other lights, I guess," Joey answered, pouting.

"Yes, fastened on the walls—just little ones, though, Joe."

Joey pondered wistfully. "I guess the Magni could fix it," he declared with a wisdom beyond his brief years.

"'Course he could," Johnnie assented, "the Coal King can do anything. He could fix it all right, if he would."

Johnnie sat still and furtively examined his bruised hands, sore from picking the pieces of slate from among the black, glistening pieces of coal. The slate had ragged, sharp edges that cut his fingers that were not yet hardened to the work. He was obliged to be very careful and very quick, too—careful to find every piece of slate or the inspector would say sharp words to him, for it would never do to have the coal leave the mine with slate in it, slate that would not burn.

"I guess it's pretty bad," Joey remarked thoughtfully. "I fink I'd better tell the Magni to make it all right. He can fix it, can't he, Johnnie? Then I can go when I'm big, and we'll have good times in the mine."

Johnnie laughed in affectionate derision. "Hear him talk, mother," he said, cheered by this unheard-of assuming of duty and its brave unconsciousness of obstacles in the way. His mother smiled, too, over this undreamed-of chivalry because of the unwonted cheer that his brave, foolish words had engendered. "And—and I'll ask the Magni to not make my mother cry any more," he added, his voice so soft that only Johnnie heard it and grew grave. He drew Joey very close to his dingy little shirt.

"The Coal King can do anything," he whispered. "He can make mother happy, even."

"Then I will tell him," announced Goldy-locks, positively, as if the Magnate were as easy of access as his own father, who presently came in with Jim and sat down to the dinner of boiled cabbage and onions. It was a Sunday luxury—this dinner of vegetables displacing the weekday code of burned potatoes and cold sausage. Wages in the mine were not conducive of luxuries for the table, as Johnnie had carefully explained to Joey as a further inducement to make him like going to school and learning "lines."

"Why," he had said, "Jim gets as must as I do, and he has been two years at work and is an expert slate-picker, and father gets only a little more—a man's work. So you must go to school, Joey."

But little Joey still shook his head unwillingly over this disposal of his future prospects which held for him but one glorifying aim, namely, to do the kind of work that his brave father and brothers were now doing.

One day little Gold-locks heard the people talking about the Magnate in low, frightened voices and he wondered who had displeased him, who had dared to say in a loud tone that they hated him, and he feared that somebody was in great trouble, because the king had heard the terrible truth. He came creeping close to his mother's skirts and listened to the frightened tones of the women who stood in a group on the broken, wooden sidewalk. And when he had listened carefully he learned that it was not as he had guessed. He learned that the Coal King's little child, his own little child, was very, very sick and that he could not live but a short time, and that the Coal King was heartbroken about it.

"Ah," said Gold-locks' mother as she snatched him up and held him close to her heart, "I am richer than the king today. They tell me that his little one is three and that he has hair of gold like my own baby. But his child is dying, and mine is spared to me. I would not trade places with the king today, for I, even poor, I am richer than he. Ah, the poor man."

Joey put his arms about her neck and pressed his warm, soft little body close to her in his loving way, and felt so content that he wanted to stay there always. But presently, at the sound of music, he wriggled down to the ground and started away with the other children to learn what it could be. Just around the corner on the next street was a man with a hand-organ, a dark man with curly black hair and whiskers, who turned the handle while a funny little creature with a tiny lady's hat on its head and a red coat buttoned about its body sat on the top of the organ and held a tin cup toward all who came near. The cup was for pennies, but only a few coins could be gathered, for the people were very poor and had little to give for street music.

It was wonderful music. The children were made so lighthearted by it that they joined hands and circled about and danced on the rough, uneven sidewalk. And when the man started away for new conquests farther down the street all the children followed him.

Joey Gold-locks went with the rest. He was barefooted, and wore soiled and faded blue little overalls, but his face was fair and sweet, fresh from his mother's care, and topped with a crest of waving, bright-gold hair, the special pride of the somber, dingy, crowded street where he lived. Everybody praised Gold-locks' bright hair, it was so like a soiled lump of sunshine among the other dark haired children the most of whom were now following tirelessly wherever the organ led them. Up one street and down another they went, getting farther and farther away from home, but never thinking of that, or caring little if they did think of it, so long as they could keep close to the enchanting music. On and on and on they followed. And presently they had left the smoky town and came into the sweet air of the hills. The road they traveled looked clean and smooth and felt cool to their parched little bare feet, and gardens bloomed in the yards that they passed. The houses were bright and fresh as if no soot or dust ever lodged on them, and the grass and foliage of the trees shone in the sunshine with lusty vigor and health.

Joey Gold-locks looked about in amazement. It was like walking through a big, bright, fairyland. He saw wide, green lawns with verdant terraces leading up to beautiful, vine-decked houses. He lagged behind in his surprise and wonder, and felt of the cool cement walk with cautious, soothed touches of his bare, baby toes. Soon he noticed that one of the houses had a larger lawn than the others. It was like a park stretching everywhere about the house and back of it, and a fountain played there in the sunshine, sparkling with rainbow colors, while the house was much larger than the rest and had more terraces and vines and flowers about it. Some of the flowers had become fastened in some odd way to the front door, which the organ man noticed and passed hurriedly on to the next house with his organ and his monkey, and the other children followed. But Joey Gold-locks stayed gazing through the low, iron fence, quite lost in curiosity and wonder.

He was just beginning to get a little drowsy with wonder when a wagon drove up to the large iron gate at one side. It was a black, odd-looking, covered wagon, long and somber looking, and it went very slowly through the gate into the yard, and Gold-locks followed it still lost in curiosity, and enjoyed the touch of the soft, clean grass on his hot, dusty little feet. It was like a thick carpet and it soothed him so much that he walked onward and on after the wagon. And soon the man who drove it stood at the side door of the big house and rang a bell.

Gold-locks was near enough [illegible] when the door opened, to see that the [illegible] maid who opened it wore a white bow in her hair and that there wa another white ribbon on the doorknob

The maid stared at him in amazement, and forgot to answer the man's low questions. But after she had let him in she beckoned to Joey and said:

"Come here, little one, and tell me your name."

The child came promptly but timidly near. "Name's Gold-locks," he said very softly, and then became silent, noticing that the eyes of the maid looked as if she had been crying. They made him think of his mother, whose eyes were red every morning after Johnnie started for the mines with father and brother Jim.

"What is your other name?" the maid asked, bending close to look into his baby blue eyes.

"Joey," the child whispered, seeing that the maid's face quivered as if she were ready to weep.

She drew him gently in and shut the door, much to Gold-lock's wonder, and his surprise grew greater when she clasped his hand and led him through a wide, pretty hallway and up a shining stair to a little room all white and shining with cool tiles from wall to floor. Here in the wall were shining, silvery things that if you turned them cool water fell out and filled a white, shining bowl. In the same way, most strange and wonderful to Gold-locks, a white and shining bathtub was filled with warm water which looked very inviting for some unknown reason, to the dusty little wanderer.

"Little Gold-locks," the maid said, putting an affectionate arm about him, "will you be a brave little man and do something very kind for me? Will you let me take off these soiled little overalls so that you can get into the nice water and I can make you all clean? Will you be a brave little man?"

Gold-locks nodded slowly, tempted both by the water and with a wish to please the girl with sad eyes so like his mother's.

"Because," the maid continued, "there is something that you must do, Gold-locks, that you must do to make comfort come t[illegible] breaking heart—when you are ready. And after the bath I am going to give you a lovely lunch with cream and berries, Gold-locks, just a lovely lunch, my dear." She was making him ready for the bath while she talked and presently he was in the water and then out again, his trembly lip quite stiffened by the sight of a pair of white overalls, of some fine heavy goods, just his size, that took the place of his soiled, faded blue ones. His feet were white and dimpled and his hair was brushed carefully until it looked more like gold than ever. The maid, who seemed to know just how to care for little children, talked cheerfully to him all the time, though now and [illegible] in her voice broke and halted as she [illegible] but Gold-locks kept a brave face and when she led him out to a little room and put him in a low chair near a little table he forgot all his fear in new wonder. Then she brought him a lunch in dishes with funny pictures on them which amused him while he ate so that he barely looked up until he had quite finished and was feeling very much refreshed and comfortable, and willing to do some talking on his own account. But, in looking up suddenly he caught the maid wiping her eyes with a handkerchief. This troubled him.

"Does your little boy go away in the morning to the bad, dark place?" he asked.

"Oh, no, no, Gold-locks," she answered so hastily that he stared at her in more wonder.

"Johnnie goes there," he told her, and was ready to explain all about it when a silvery bell tinkled and the maid went quickly out in answer to it. She was gone so long that Gold-locks slipped from his chair and ventured to explore not only the little room but the one next to it where he thought to find her. But though he looked carefully about he saw no one. So he wandered about gently, admiring everything but touching nothing, until he stopped at the doorway of another room that was large and dark, where a big man was pacing back and forth with a heavy frown on his face and a great trouble in his big dark eyes. Gold-locks stopped, almost [illegible]d of him, and as soon as the man saw the child he stopped, too, and stared at [illegible] in silent amazement. Then he sank into a chair, as if weak and dazed about something, but still staring at Gold-locks, in a helpless way as if his senses had left him.

"Ah, ah—ah," he said, over and over, "I knew it could never be true—I knew it all the time. They were mistaken after all. They said he was gone from me—but I knew better—I knew better all the time. I knew he could not leave [illegible] I knew it."

Gold-locks did not hear half he said, but he studied the man with his own sharp eyes and remembered some things that Johnnie had said about the Coal King—"big, and dark-faced and stern"—and he quickly decided what to do, for he remembered his promise to Johnnie and his very earnest wish to have his mother made happy. So he went promptly up to the big man and said:

"Are you the Coal King? Are you the Magni?"

But the man was dumb and stared as if he were afraid of Gold-locks, and presently [illegible]cks went on as if he were impelled to del[illegible]r his message

"Because I want you to please make my mother not to[illegible]

"Wha-at?" the man managed to ask, with a vague fear that the child did not belong there—that he belonged to somebody else and would presently go away again. The thought of this brought tears of self-pity to his eyes, the first that he had shed, and Gold-locks saw them with his own understanding.

"Does your little boy go to the bad, dark place?" he asked. "Is he there now? That's what makes my mother cry—Johnnie goes there. It's a very bad place. But you can fix it—you can do anything if you are the Magni."

The man seemed more troubled, and his face whitened and [illegible]rdened as he sat still looking at Gold-locks and trying to clear [illegible]s dazed, sad thoughts. Then he reached [illegible]t his arms and drew Gold-locks to him [illegible]nd held him close to his sore and aching [illegible]eart as if the touch of his soft little body [illegible]ere a balm and a comfort.

"They do call me a magnate," he said at [illegible] and I am not so sure that I like the [illegible]ither. Those fellows down in Smoky Town [illegible]on't love me a great deal, I suppose."

He said it more to himself than to the child, although he was looking into the fair face so close to his own dark, stern one.

"Nobody loves you," Gold-locks told him very frankly.

The man's face grew whiter at these words and Gold-locks put a small hand on the broad shoulder.

"What is your name?" the man asked abruptly.

"Name's Gold-locks," was the answer.

"Gold-locks. Is that all?"

"Joey."

The man nodded, remembering the unpronounceable surnames of the miners, far beyond the skill of infant talkers.

"So—nobody loves me," he repeated, taking the cherub face between his big hands, his hungry eyes filled with pain and stern grief.

"Johnnie said that you can do anything," whispered Gold-locks, half afraid, and quite sorry for the man for some reason he could not define, "he said you could make mother happy, even."

The man sat silent a long time after that, thinking, thinking, thinking. At last he stood up, still holding Gold-locks close to his sore heart, and went down the broad front stairway, and when he had taken his hat he kept on down the porch steps, and the walk, and through the front gate, and on, and on, over the cement sidewalk toward Smoky Town, holding Gold-locks close in his arms all the time, close to his sad heart, as if it were a comfort to feel him there.

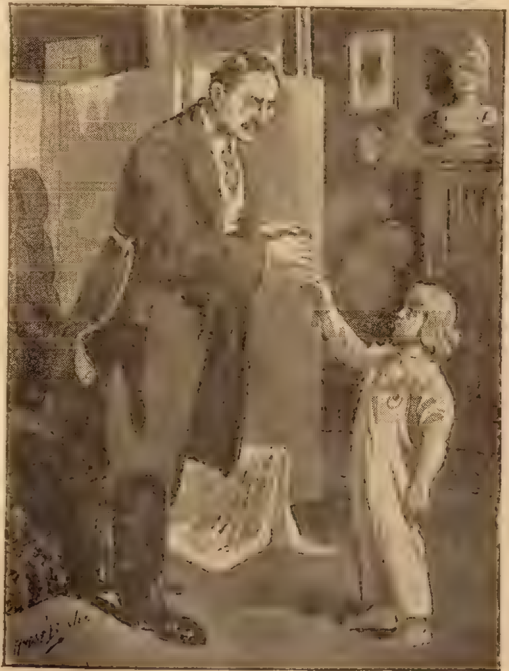
"Do you know this child?" he demanded of the superintendent as soon as he had arrived at the offices of the mine.

"Yes, indeed. He is the Gold of Smoky Town," was the ready answer. "His mother was here a half-hour ago looking for him."

"Has he a brother in the mines?"

"Two of them—Jim and Johnnie."

"Send for Johnnie," the Coal King ordered huskily



"Nobody loves you."

[illegible]t his summons and grimy with coal dust, [illegible]rrived, he was astonished to see Gold-locks in shining white overalls, sitting in the arms of the Magnate.

"Johnnie," said the Coal King, "take Gold-locks to your mother and tell h[illegible] you are going back to school. We are going to change things at the mine after this. We are to have electric lights in the mine—plenty of them, too—and a new pumping apparatus for keeping the water away, and every man's wages will be increased from this day forward. Tell your mother that, Johnnie."

Even the superintendent was startled. Johnnie, too much overcome at the news to move, could only stand open-mouthed, and let his happy thoughts take possession of him. But presently, in his gratefulness, he thought to repay the king in a small way, and sidled up to Gold-locks with a whispered request:

"Say the line I told you about the roses, Goldy-locks."

But Gold-locks shook his head and slipped down from the king's lap all ready to go back to his mother. He was sure there was nothing more to say and slipped [illegible]l hand into Johnnie's and drew him to the door. It was a half-hour later that the Coal King made his way back to his sad home with a new comfort warming his heart, one that made it almost light with sublime peace, because he had sent happy news to more than two thousand people who lived in Smoky Town.

China's Crippled Women.

Despite certain efforts at reform China is still binding the feet of its women. A traveler writes: "All the women met, old and young, have mutilated feet. Imperial decrees exhort the people to discontinue the practice, and some enlightened people have done so. But the custom in these central provinces is practically universal. Chinese writers in English journals speak of the [illegible]tom as having been already abandoned, but nobody who travels in the interior of the empire is yet able to note any apparent improvement. Nevertheless, there is some improvement. The anti-foot-binding society, founded by the energy of Mrs. Archibald Little, has been untiring in [illegible] efforts to reduce the evil. It has accomplished a great deal [illegible]me high officials have publicly stigmatized the custom, which the ruling race have never practiced, but I doubt whether all told, in spite of all the work done by Mrs. Little and other philanthropists, 5 per cent of the women of China are blessed with natural feet. I believe that the feet of ninety-five out of every 100 females in China above the age of 8 are mutilated. Yet the practice must cease if China is to take her due place among civilized nations.

"A powerful stimulus to the movement is given in the regulations issued by the ministry of education on Jan. 14 for the control of girls' schools in China. In these it is ordained that no girl shall be admitted to school who dresses in foreign clothes or has unnatural feet. It is one of the wisest regulations yet issued in China, and will have more effect than any number of exhortatory imperial edicts.

"In this province of Shensi feet are bound more tightly than in other provinces, the foot being compressed into an unsightly peg [illegible] a hideous deformity that adds enormo[illegible]ly to the burden of the people."

A Serious Mistake.

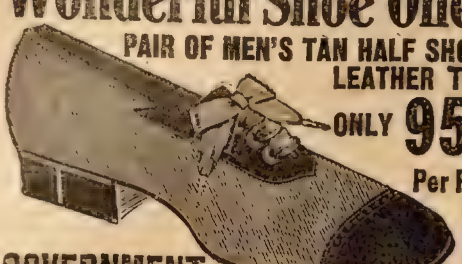
"I see you have named one of your boats Baby," said the loafer.

"Yes," rejoined the m[illegible]n who had cha[illegible] of [illegible] [illegible]ats at the lak[illegible]de summer resort. "Don't you like it?"

"Oh, it's nothing to me," rejoined the loafer, "but it's liable to cause trouble."

"How can it cause trouble?" queried the boatman.

"Why," replied the other, "every fool who comes along will think i's up to him to rock it. See?"



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JOHN A. SMITH.

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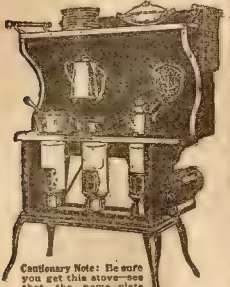
AN UP-TO-DATE STOVE

Do you realize there is no longer any reason why you should use a coal range? Oil is cheaper than coal; it is lighter and easier to handle, and gives an intense heat. Provided you have the right stove, oil is more economical, cleaner and less trouble. Have you seen the

New Perfection
WICK BLUE FLAME
Oil Cook-stove

The accompanying illustration gives you only a rough idea of its appearance. You really can't appreciate it until you either use it yourself, or talk to someone who has used it. It does everything that a coal range will do—except heat the room. The New Perfection Oil Cook-Stove will do anything, from heating a kettle of water to cooking a course dinner, but it won't heat a room. It doesn't "smell," it doesn't smoke. It can't get out of order. Light it and it is ready. Turn it down and it is out. Only a woman who knows the trouble of carrying coal and cooking in a hot kitchen can appreciate what it means to have a clean, perfect stove that will cook anything, boil, bake or roast, and yet won't heat the kitchen. How is it done? The flame is controlled in turquoise-blue enamel chimneys, and directed against the bottom of pot, pan, kettle or oven, and only there. The flame operates exactly where it is needed—and nowhere else. With this stove your kitchen is cool.

The nickel finish with the bright blue of the chimneys makes the stove ornamental and attractive. Made with 1, 2 and 3 burners; the 2 and 3-burner stoves can be had with or without Cabinet.



Cautionary Note: Be sure you get this stove—see that the name-plate reads "New Perfection."

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Please send me agent's outfit and bundle of papers and instructions.

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Town ....
State.................. Date ....1909 Age ....

Pickled Peppers

Courtesy and Celerity.

Mayor Lyons, of Mobile, said in a recent interview:

"No, I cannot pronounce judgment on this occasion yet. Do you take me for Judge Taliaferro?"

"Judge Taliaferro," the mayor explained, with a smile, "was holding court, back before the war, in the little courthouse of Citronelle. It was a cloudy spring afternoon, and a very difficult and puzzling case was on. The lawyers wrangled, quoted from great law books and broke into grand fights of eloquence, while Judge Taliaferro listened solemnly, or gazed out of the window at the approaching storm.

"It grew darker. The judge snatched a sheet of paper, scribbled a line or two upon it, and placing it beneath a paperweight, took up his hat.

"'Colonel,' he said briskly to the lawyer who had the floor, 'excuse me fo' interruptin' yuh, sah; and I want that you should go right on with yo' argument, fo' it's a darned good one. But it's suah goin' to rain this evenin', colonel, an' I just natcherly got to set out my sweet potatoes right away. But you go right on, colonel; and majah, you follow him up; an' when you two gentlemen get through you'll find my decision under this head weight.'

"And the judge disappeared through the door before the lawyers had time to exchange one astonished glance."

■

TRANSITIONAL.

This is a sort o' lazy time;
Hazy time; dazy time;
Sort o' genial crazy time—
(Things ain't what they seem).

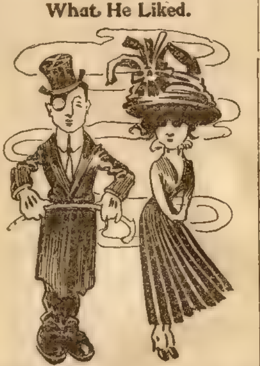
Time to drift and doze and sing,
Not to work at anything,
Just be glad because it's spring—
Time to loaf and dream.

Time to loaf and lie aroun'
On the flower-bordered groun',
Heedless of the whistle's soun',
(You don't need to stir!)

Lookin' at the skies above,
Talkin' soft and low o' love,
Cooin' like a turtle dove—
Holdin' hands with her

■

What He Liked.



Blinks—Did you know Jones' wife was treating him like a dog?

Mrs. Blinks—No; what does she do to him?

Blinks—She doesn't do a thing but pet him all the time.

❧

Tall One by the Colonel.

The colonel was telling his first fish story of the season.

"Yes, gentlemen," he related, as he lit a black cigar, "this particular day I had been sitting on the bank for four hours without a solitary nibble. Presently I waded out into the middle of the stream to seek better luck, and, would you believe it, a vast school of fish came up and began to feed right around my ankles without even noticing my presence. You may believe it or not, gentlemen, but all I had to do was to dip down and pick them up like picking salmon out of a can."

The colonel paused for breath and his friends passed around incredulous winks.

"It may be true, colonel," ventured one, "but any one that knows anything about fish will tell you that they have wonderful eyesight and are very timid. How is it these fish didn't see you?"

The colonel raised his chin to a dignified poise.

"I was fishing in the Mammoth cave in Kentucky," he said, "and the fish there have no eyes."

❧

Just the Size.

"What are you going to do with that automobile ring?" asked Kidder, in the garage.

"Sell it for old rubber," responded Cogger, that's all it is good for now."

"Why, the idea! Don't you know it would make an excellent teething ring for a baby?"

"What are you trying to give me? There never lived a baby with a mouth large enough to hold that ring."

"Oh, yes, a baby elephant."

❧

Getting the Best of It.

A farmer was selling some eggs to a road hotel man. The price was 40 cents a dozen, and there was one egg over four dozen. The farmer demanded 3 cents for the egg. Landlord wanted it "thrown in with the bargain," but the farmer objected. Finally the landlord said:

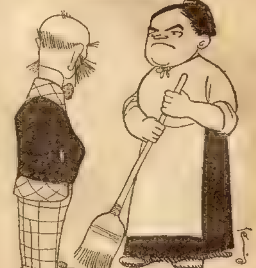
"Well, I'll take the egg and treat you to a drink."

"All right," said the farmer. When asked what he would have he replied.

"Well, I allus drink sherry wine with an egg in it." And then they say farmers buy gold bricks.

❧

Impertinent.



Master—Jane, your mistress tells me that you wish to leave and become an attendant at a lunatic asylum. Why, what experience have you had?

Jane—Well, sir, I've been here three years.

■

Four in a Bed.

Rev. Daniel Isaacs once alighted at an inn to stay the night. On asking for a bed he was told he could not have one, as there was to be a ball that evening and all the beds were engaged.

"At what time does the ball break up?" asked Mr. Isaacs.

"About 3 in the morning, sir."

"Well, then, can I have a bed until that time?"

"Yes, certainly; but if the bed is asked for you will have to remove."

"Very well," replied Mr. Isaacs, and away he went to get between the sheets.

About 3 in the morning he was awakened by loud knocking at the chamber door.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"How many are there of you in there?" inquired a voice.

"There's me, and Daniel and Mr. Isaacs and an old Methodist preacher," was the reply.

"Then there's plenty of you." And the speaker passed on, leaving Mr. Isaacs to enjoy his bed.

❧

A Serious Threat.

Indianians tell a story of Senator Beveridge's entrance into politics when he was little more than a boy. He won the liking of the Governor of the State by a quaint little speech he made during the presentation of a petition by a delegation whose spokesman was insufferably longwinded and tedious. The man talked to the Governor nearly an hour, during which every one stood. To all it seemed that it would never end.

When, however, it finally did, the Governor asked wearily if the delegates wished to offer any further reasons for the granting of the petition.

Whereupon Beveridge remarked quietly: "If you don't grant it, Governor, we'll have that speech repeated to you."

■

He Got the Job.

"Say, do you need a boy?" queried the little fellow, as he stepped inside the door of the ice dealer's office.

"Ever been in the ice business?" queried the dealer

"No, sir."

"Know anything about arithmetic?"

"Not much."

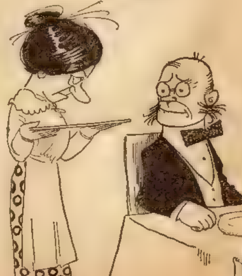
"What would twenty pounds of ice amount to at 2 cents a pound?"

"Eighty cents."

"Good boy! Come around in the morning and go to work."

❧

Crushed.



Boarder—He who runs may read.

Landlady—Well, I wish you'd read that board bill you've run up.

BOY'S
AND
GIRL'S
CORNER

The Young Fur Takers;

Or, Traps and Trails in the Wilderness

By St. George Rathborne

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Begun in No. 22, May 28. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH OF THE BULL MOOSE.

ANSON had discovered the moose yard!

Without saying anything about it he had been for some time keenly on the lookout for this same thing, feeling full confidence that his friend the big bull moose had not left the valley entirely, for nowhere would he find better forage than here.

And finally the boy's searching was rewarded, when he heard certain sounds proceeding from a section of the forest where he had not visited in a long time; and suspecting what their significance might be he had crawled up close, keeping the wind in front of him, and his reward had come when his startled eyes fell upon a group of four moose, stamping around a depression in the deep snow, which was piled all around like ramparts, giving the place the appearance of a veritable "yard."

"It looked just like a barnyard, with a lot of mules stamping around, only that royal old bull with his great, spreading horns beat the band. I'm after him tomorrow, you can bet, and I want you to go along to carry my gun; for, of course, I'll have to use your rifle on that monster," said Anson, in conclusion.

So it was arranged that the morrow should witness a grand moose hunt.

They would, of course, have to go on snowshoes, for the ground was covered to a depth of more than two feet on the level; should the moose break out of their enclosure they could not go far away on account of the difficulty they would experience in wading through the snow, as the crust would not hold them while the young hunters could slide all around them, the thin layer of ice that had lately formed on the surface being just to their liking.

Anson even figured on just how he would cure what meat they secured, and arrange the head of the royal victim where it would add picturesqueness to their lodge in the vast wilderness.

Such confidence was charming, Caleb declared, though he knew the other meant it when he said the moose had not the shadow of a chance to elude them, once his stamping grounds were discovered.

They saw to it that everything was in apple-pie order, including buckshot shells for the Marlin, straps on the snowshoes and even the edges of their hunting knives made keen, as well as the working of the rifle looked into; for it is esteemed dangerous work, braving the rage of a bull moose, and the breaking of a strap on a snowshoe has ere now been the means of a hunter's death under such conditions.

There are times when a stitch in time not only saves nine, but human lives as well; and our boys were careful.

It was snowing a little the next morning, but Anson was too full of the subject to think of putting it off, so after breakfast they started, filled with delightful anticipations as to the outcome.

A long tramp was before them, but both were fresh and vigorous, and had no complaint on that score.

About an hour before noon they arrived in the neighborhood of the yard, and Anson counseled extreme caution in approaching, since the moose has an extraordinarily fine sense of smell, and one whiff of their presence would send the lot crashing the snow heaps, adding to the perils of the chase, and making success less certain.

Caleb came close at his heels carrying the shotgun, which, with its heavily loaded buckshot shells was a weapon not to be despised, even on a hunt for such royal game as moose.

Foot by foot they crept along, taking advantage of every bush and heap of snow; and the fact that Anson had been here before gave them an advantage, as he only had to follow his yesterday's trail, the wind holding in the same general quarter, and blowing from the moose toward them.

Finally, after some time spent in this approach, during which Caleb was thrilled with the sounds coming to his ears, he was allowed to raise his head slowly and take a peep.

The snow had commenced to fall quite heavily now, and this served as an additional protection.

Caleb saw several gaunt animals, looking, as his chum had said, like mules, moving from one end of a yard to the other in a restless manner, now and then reaching up to pull a branch down and strip it of twigs.

At first he thought the old bull had gone, and was feeling intense disappointment on account of Anson, who had counted so on getting those horns; but presently a movement in one corner caught his eye, and he was thrilled to see the size of the animal that stood there, now commencing to strike his hoofs into the frozen ground in a suggestive manner.

"He scents us some way or other," he whispered to his comrade, as the old bull gave what seemed to be a whistle, and shook his horns with a crash against the branches of the tree overhead.

"I'm afraid so; but it only hurries things a bit. I'm going to take my crack at the old warrior now. Be ready to back me up, and pay no attention to any of the others at first. If he falls as if killed, do you try and pot that half-grown youngster; I'd like him for meat, for the grandad is as tough as shoestrings most likely. Now, watch your eye!"

This Anson whispered in the ear of his friend in the faintest sort of way; but Caleb knew what was expected of him, and had already picked out the youngest of the four animals.

When Anson fired it was necessary for the other to watch to see what the result of his shot might be, and thus he lost sight of the bull's mate and young for a dozen seconds; when he did find time to turn his attention that way they had broken bounds and disappeared from sight.

They would not have tender meat that day, at least, it seemed.

As for the big bull, he went down with a crash at the sound of the rifle, and floundered there upon the ground in a manner that was in one sense pitiful.

Twice he made as if about to scramble to his feet, and Caleb kept the Marlin swinging in his direction, ready to cut loose the instant there seemed any necessity for it; but it would appear that the young marksman had made the master shot of his career, and actually touched the heart of the grand old bull with his lead, so that death overtook the monarch of the snow woods then and there.

Caleb was intensely interested in seeing him go under, for never had he watched so large an animal give up; but there was pity mingled with exultation in the shout the two lads sent up as the bull finally keeled over and lay still.

He was a majestic figure, even lying there in death.

Time, however, would not allow of their standing and neglecting their duties, so they soon got to work.

How they were ever going to get that grand head with its majestic horns down the long valley to the camp was a puzzle; but Anson had been figuring it out, and announced that he had come prepared to draw it up into a tree with a rope and pulley, and some day later he would come with a sledge he had made, upon which it could readily be taken to the cabin and prepared for keeping.

Those portions of the meat which could be made into stews and soup they wrapped up in the hide, and passing a stout stick through the package were able to transport the same with many rests, to camp.

Caleb noticed that for a short time his friend seemed to exult over the downing of the great moose; but after a while Anson's manner changed, and he took on what seemed to be a serious state of mind.

At first Caleb imagined he had been seized with remorse because the little family had been left without a head and protector; but upon broaching the subject to his chum it was received with a shrug of the shoulders and a sad smile.

"Sorry I'm not quite so tender-hearted as that; but to tell you the truth, my boy, it suddenly dawned upon me that I may have unwittingly broken the game law, and killed a moose out of season. Strange to say we neglected to bring a copy of the New York game laws with us, and I'm not sure when the time for open season on moose ends, or whether the matter is even mentioned, seeing that these animals are past history to a great extent in the State. If I find I have done so you can depend upon it I'll make a point of seeing a warden as soon as we come out of here, and pay my fine like a little man. I give you my word, Cale, it never occurred to me until yesterday, and the killing happened a week back. One thing I'm glad of, and that is you didn't have any chance to add another victim to the score. One will be heavy enough if it's so," he said, solemnly.

And Caleb believed him, for he would have no object in stating what was not so, and Anson had always been found to be the very essence of honor.

He was doubly glad that he had not been able to knock over the young moose, for it would have been a constant reproach to him to know he had broken the law, and the fine must have eaten heavily into his profits of the season.

So after all it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, and while Caleb had felt a bit downcast at the time he failed to bag his moose he was now pleased.

During this long interval he had managed to catch four more foxes in various traps, but the little rascals were mighty sly, and more frequently stole the bait with nothing to show for it but a few red hairs along the teeth of the contraption that was warranted to hold them.

Two more months would see them through, for it was now well into February, and, indeed, nearing March; but winter holds in these high altitudes much longer than further South, and the ice sometimes does not got out of the lakes until the warm breath of April comes along.

As game had become quite scarce by this time, they found it necessary to husband their resources somewhat, and more than once both ate, and really enjoyed a delightfully baked musquash, the very dish at which they had come near turning up their noses earlier in the season.

Other meals were made from canned things Anson had insisted on bringing along, and stews formed from dried bear meat or venison that had anything but an inviting appearance until that young wizard of the cook stove took hold and turned them into a most palatable dish, capable of appeasing hunger and arousing the warmest praise of the chef at the same time.

Plainly, Anson was a fellow worth knowing, and surely he must have a strain of French blood in him, else would he never have been able to get up such delightful dishes out of nothing.

Then March came in, boisterous and still bitter cold; but our lads were snug in their retreat, and cared little about the falling of the mercury many degrees below the zero point in the little thermometer hanging just outside the door.

One day when stormbound Caleb went all over his bundles of furs, and found to his delight that they were in an excellent state of preservation. They numbered several hundred in all, for the muskrats had responded nobly to his appeal, and promised to head the list in number and value, with the mink a good second.

At the time, Anson laughingly declared the cabin presented the appearance of a Hudson Bay trading post, with the factor bargaining for the season's output of pelts on the part of a Cree Indian from the Saskatchewan region.

But it was pleasure to Caleb to look around and think that his had been the hand to gather in every one of that vast collection of splendid furs.

CHAPTER XIII.

BREAKING CAMP.

It was on the seventeenth of March, illustrious day of St. Patrick, that Caleb had the surprise of the season thrust upon him.

The killing of the lynx under such dramatic conditions, the visit and subsequent adventure with the panther, and finally that death of the grand old bull moose all sank into significance beside the shock Caleb received on this day.

He had been up along the creek, and into the swamp, but the catch was abnormally low, so that as he hurried homeward through a fine powdery snow that had some of the earmarks of a young blizzard, his spirits sank correspondingly, and he was not feeling very much as though he had been repaid for the long and wearisome tramp.

As he neared a spot where some days before he had seen the imprint of a fox, it occurred to him to step aside and take a look at a trap he had set near by.

Nothing had been taken in this particular trap all winter, and he used to laughingly refer to it as his "Jonah," when mentioning the outfit.

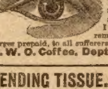
"I guess I might as well carry the old thing to camp, now that my load is so light. No use hoping that the spell will ever be broken on this hoodoo. Perhaps there's something about the steel that scares everything away, and it needs a smoking in burning hemlock browse. I've got a good notion——" and that was as far as he went in his ruminations, for he caught a sound just ahead, where the "old Jonah" had been set, that sent an electric shock through him.

Surely there must be some sort of animal in the trap.

He heard a threshing sound, then a whine, followed by a scramble, as though a victim were endeavoring to escape.

Caleb hurried through the scrub, and the next moment stood as if transfixed.

There was something in the trap, something that indulged in violent gyrations at



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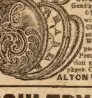

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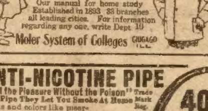

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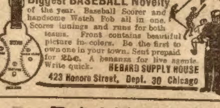

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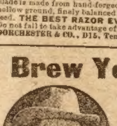

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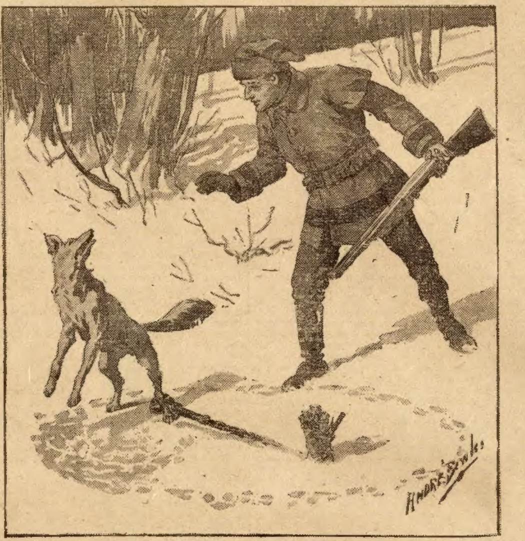
sight of a human being, and vainly endeavored to tear loose, or drag the trap from its anchorage—something that flashed through space like a streak of burnished silver, and yet which he immediately saw bore a strange resemblance to a wily Reynard.

No wonder Caleb was almost paralyzed with astonishment and delight.

The greatest streak of luck of all his life had seemingly come to him on this gloomy St. Patrick's day—he had caught a silver fox!



He had caught a silver fox.

Knowing that the fur of such a beauty must be worth all the way from three hundred up to a thousand dollars, he saw fortune before him, ready to be gathered in.

If he could only dispose of the little beauty without in any way injuring his glossy coat, how delighted he would be; and to accomplish this Caleb now set himself, always keeping his gun within reach of his hand, in case the fox managed to break away; for while he should hate very much to have to shoot, still, rather than lose the prize altogether he meant to do so.

While his excitement made him a bit clumsy, still in the end he managed to knock the fox over, and then it was easy enough to accomplish the rest very soon.

As he saw the beautiful little fellow lying before him Caleb took off his hat and gave a series of whoops that sounded strangely through the snow forest.

It was the climax of his successful season of trapping.

Men have gone through a long life in the woods, gathering furs, without ever taking a silver fox; and yet strange as it might seem, here was a mere tyro scooping in a magnificent prize on his first winter out.

That is the way it frequently happens, however.

I have fished a lake noted for its bass twenty-five years, taking virtually thousands out by means of artificial fly, frogs, spinner, minnow, crawfish, helgramite, and every other means known to a disciple of Doctor Henshall, and never having a fish to my credit heavier than four and a half pounds; yet here comes a big lumbering city greenhorn trolling as he was told to do by his guide, and catching the record fish of the lake, weighing several pounds more than my best; and when it was caught in the weeds at the bottom, actually jumping overboard in three feet of water, scooping weeds and fish up in his arms and depositing the mess in the boat!

Think of it! Talk about luck!

Caleb was not so bad as that, because he had elements that go to make up a successful trapper in his composition, and even this one season's experience had given him a deeper insight into the business than many men obtain in years, simply because they never observe the habits of the animals they trap.

When Anson saw what his pard was carrying over his shoulder he made the woods echo with his exultant whoops, while he danced about like a wild Iroquois Indian.

"Wow! didn't I say you'd do it if anybody could? Talk about luck, you are a whole team and a dog under the wagon. If you go to college and play on the baseball and football teams you'll win a reputation second to none. Say, did you ever see such a little beauty in all your life? No wonder they bring a thousand each. I bet this fellow is as fine as they ever made 'em, too. Shake hands, old chap. I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart," and there could be no question as to his sincerity, if one were to judge from the earnest manner in which he wrung Caleb's hand.

Not intent with that the impulsive Ans threw his arms about his chum, and squeezed him like a bear.

Their affection, the one for the other, was as sincere as that of David and Jonathan, or Damon and Pythias; and it would last for long years to come, even when both of them had taken their rightful places among the men who do things out in the big world.

There is nothing that will draw a couple of congenial souls closer together than months spent in company in the wilderness, where no outside influence comes to mar the communion—then it is that they learn to know each other in a way that could never happen among the haunts of men, for the soul is bared when there is no heed of artificial veneering or polish, and the true man appears.

After this great day Caleb did not much care how soon the season came to an end, for he knew he had accomplished his ambition, with plenty to spare, and deep down in his heart he was yearning to see his dear mother again.

Still, they stuck it out, for the creek would not be navigable until all the ice had gone, and it was necessary that they use the canoes in transporting that glorious stock of furs to civilization.

Uncle Abner probably never went down that creek with a cargo one-half as valuable as that which the two young trappers took out of the wilderness; and as he paddled Caleb often allowed his thoughts to wander to the old man whom he remembered so well, always with pleasure and thanksgiving, since it had been owing more than a little to the good advice given in his diaries that this fine measure of success had befallen them, not to mention the fact that the bundle of traps in the chest had really inspired the idea of a winter in the woods.

The return trip was much easier than the plunge into the wilderness had been, for it was all downstream, and the swift current formed by the melting snows in the mountains did much to hurry their progress.

In two days they were home again, and Caleb had his arms about the neck of his mother, who had looked forward to his coming as only a loving parent can.

Tedbury boys were agog with excitement, and came in droves to see and handle the beautiful furs which the young trappers had brought out of the wilderness.

Even the doubting Thomas of the village gave up, and declared that Caleb Cushing was the luckiest fellow on earth, and he would take off his hat to him in the future.

What the collection brought when Anson sent it to the house in St. Louis with which he was in communication does not matter, but it more than touched the top-notch figure the boys had dreamed of, and Caleb saw his college year provided for.

The fur coat for the little mother Anson saw to, and it was a beauty when done; and a proud woman wore it the following winter, when her boy was writing home from college of his work there.

One thing can be set down as assured, and this is that if Caleb pursues his studies with the same ambition and perseverance that he exhibited up there in the wilderness he is bound to make a grand success, and accomplish things in the business haunts of men.

He and Anson never told just where they took those pelts, for it might be they would want to go again some other time, and there did not seem to be any necessity for giving the secret away. Perhaps the spirit of good old Uncle Abner would be grieved if his favorite nooks were overrun with a pack of strangers, bent on exterminating every living thing that made its home there. The thought of those quaint and interesting beaver also had something to do with this secrecy; for they had spared the little colony, hoping to have it increase in size, and naturally disliked the idea of others more ruthless potting the broadtails for the sake of the few dollars their furs would fetch.

Sure enough, upon the floor of his room at college Caleb had a rug made of a gray skin; and often while he sits and studies, or reflects upon the past, his eyes will light up and a smile sweep over his face as he once more recalls that night in the valley cabin when the hungry panther fell down the broad-throated chimney, and aroused them to a sense of their danger.

Caleb and Anson are as close chums as ever, even though they do not attend the same college; but they are fond of laying great plans concerning the future, when they anticipate seeing more of each other.

The end.

Lords of the Ax.

(Continued from page seven.)

"I don't know," and the foreman shrugged his shoulders.

"Did you ever know?"

"What do you mean?"

"Mr. Sherwood understood you to assert that you met an Indian at the foot of the mountain who gave you the papers, after which he departed; that you found the documents not to be for you, so you took them to Sherwood. As before said, I am attorney to the owner of Liberty claim. Mr. Sherwood and I would like to have you answer two questions: First, where is that Indian, and, second, why did he give the papers to you?"

Mr. Nettleton, standing straight and impressive, was as cold as ice and as suggestive as a dagger. His speech was incisive and masterful; his steady gray eyes bored like gimlets, and his appearance and speech, combined, revealed a settled purpose and a poorly-hidden threat.

He fairly radiated accusation.

Napoleon looked him steadily in the eyes.

"I infer," he replied, "that the documents were given me through mistake. As to where the Indian is, you can look for him yourself!"

"I shall look for something else!" retorted the lawyer curtly. "There is a mystery about the papers. Frankly, I don't believe there has been any Indian in the case. Now, sir, it will be to your advantage to explain fully. I am reluctant to publicly accuse you of foul play! Will you explain?"

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A Modern Proposal.

He—You know, Celeste, what modern living means. You read the papers of course?

She—Yes, George. And I hear all about it at home. Nothing but high prices.

He—That's right. Everything is up but salaries—and car fare.

She—I guess that's true. Mme. Gore won't touch a waist now for anything under $4.

He—My mother and sister go to somebody else, but I'm sure they must be all alike. Anyway, father does a good deal more kicking than he used to do.

She—And rents are way up for everything that's desirable.

He—I know. I've been around. It's discouraging, isn't it?

She—Awfully.

He (after a little pause)—Of course, it wouldn't be fair to you to ask you to marry me.

She—And I'm sure it wouldn't be fa[illegible] you if I accepted your offer.

He—By Jove, Celeste, you're an a[illegible] unselfishness.

She—I love you too well to be a [illegible] to you.

He—Confound the consequences[illegible] cares for high prices! Let's get [illegible] anyway!

She—Y-yes, George.

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DESTINY GUIDED.

With a pleasant whirring of wheels and an occasional deep note from the siren, the big, red motor slipped along the country roads, through startled village streets. The chauffeur knew his business and his machine. It obeyed his skilled touch like a living thing. No horse perfectly broken to whip and rein could have been more responsive.

Angenette sat in her place looking listlessly at the changing effect of the October sky, fields, shrunken trees and coldly opaque water that spun by like a monotonous succession of moving pictures. Beside her sat her mother.

Angenette was conscious of that generous profile—the high nose, the plump cheeks, the comfortable chin snuggling within the sable collar. Yet here, as elsewhere, she felt the same sense of remoteness, of withdrawal from her mother.

The girl was thinking of past things—the year abroad and the time before that when she had been happy, and engaged to the one man seemingly most suitable for her to marry.

"You can't do better than to take him," her mother had urged. Angenette had agreed. She was fascinated by the idea of money and his family and his manner. She had been taught that money and manner and family were the first essentials in life.

So she deliberately put aside every contrary inclination and sentiment. She believed she was in love with him. Certainly she was very proud to be chosen by him.

Then suddenly he had gone away and there had come back from him a letter saying that he had made a mistake—they were not suited for each other and he wished to have the engagement canceled. She canceled it, of course, and then after some sleepless nights and terrible days her mother snatched her away to Europe.

Yet all she could remember of Paris was that she had bought some gowns in the rue de la Paix, and of Italy that she had looked one sunset time at the Campagna through tearful eyes, and of London that she had seen walking in the Strand a man who looked like—him.

Now she was coming back in the new red car her mother had ordered before they went away. The car was another offering made to distract her from her humiliation and grief. As if she were a child to have her crying spell stopped by new toys!

She remembered when to be sailing through the country like this would have seemed joy enough for a lifetime, but now she only realized shrinkingly that she was going home—back to the place where she had experienced the greatest joy and the greatest disappointment of her life.

"Angenette," said her mother, bending toward her, "do you see? We are getting near home."

Angenette nodded.

"We are making very good time," Mrs. Vaile went on. "The car behaves perfectly."

"Wh—What—LeFergie, what is the matter?"

The car, purring volubly, was coming to a stop—had stopped most unexpectedly. The chauffeur had got out and touched his cap. His face by reason of visor and goggles looked grotesque.

"Something is wrong," he said. "If you ladies will get out, please, I'll see what I can do."

They stepped out. Mrs. Vaile sat down upon a convenient rock which the sunshine had warmed somewhat. Angenette walked about, kicking the dry, fallen leaves with a restless foot. The chauffeur took some tools from the box and crawled under the machine.

They were in a bit of woodland, at the end of which the road disappeared around a sharp curve. It was very still there save for the ineffectual panting of the machine, the clatter of tools and the rustling of leaves as Angenette walked.

Mrs. Vaile, disgusted, sat watching the chauffeur. It was cold, the sun was going down, and they were still some distance from home.

"It's a downright shame," she grumbled. "I was never so put out in my life. This just bears me out in my first opinion, Angenette, that the first car we considered would be more satisfactory. If it hadn't been for you——"

"But, mamma, what did I say?" Angenette inquired, facing her mother. Then, she turned quickly toward the opening in the woodland where the road resolved itself into a curve.

Wheels were approaching—good, steel-shod wheels, which bumped over stones and rattled in the ruts. Suddenly horses and wagon came in sight—thin-legged brown horses, with plenty of style in their makeup, and a covered buggy, in which sat a man with an unrecognizable strip of face visible between the brim of his hat and the turned-up collar of his coat.

At sight of the car the horses began to dance, and it took all the man's skill to manage them. There was not room in the narrow road for him to pass, and he brought his team to a standstill. Then he lifted his hat to the ladies and his face was revealed.

"Hiram!" Angenette exclaimed, and promptly lost some of the color that the wind had whipped into her face. She went toward him swiftly. As swiftly he sprang from the buggy.

"Miss Vaile!" he returned.

"Miss Vaile! Oh, Hiram!" Angenette reproached him, holding out her hand. They looked into each other's eyes and Angenette smiled.

"How did you know me?" he asked.

"Why, I should have known you anywhere." She spoke almost gayly and her mother stared at her a little. Angenette suddenly remembered her mother.

"Mama, this is Hiram Ansted," she said. "You see," hurriedly, trying to draw his attention from her mother's frigid manner, "our car has broken down. Poor Le Fergie is under it trying to see if it will ever go again."

"I don't know much about cars," the young man said, "but I've heard they were very erratic in behavior, even more so than horses." He stroked the velvet nose nearest him.

"I never saw these horses before," Angenette said. "Where are the old grays?"

"Oh," he laughed, "I gave them a life lease of the stable and pasture. They've served their time."

The girl gave him an understanding look.

Mrs. Vaile moved forward. "Can't you do anything with the machine, Le Fergie?" she demanded impatiently.

"Madam, I don't know. I'm doing my best; but there's something here I can't seem to remedy just yet. If you will wait a little longer—" His voice ended in a violent sneeze.

Mrs. Vaile ignored the sneeze.

"It's too cold for us to wait," she said. "My feet are numb. We'll take our death of cold, Angenette. Night's coming on and I want my dinner. We should have been home by this time."

"I'm sure LeFergie is doing all he can, mama," soothed Angenette. "I'm sorry you're cold and hungry."

Hiram spoke eagerly. "I can tell you what to do. Let me take you home with me. My old housekeeper will get you up some kind of fare. And the man can follow with the machine as soon as he gets it going. If he can't fix it, he can step over to the house there on the ridge and 'phone me and I'll come down with the mules."

Mrs. Vaile began to wake up.

"Thank you, Hiram," she said. "I'm sure we shall be very glad to accept your invitation, shan't we Angenette? Just let me speak to Le Fergie——"

Hiram was shifting the robes when she returned. He helped her in and Angenette after her, then entered himself, apologizing for having to crowd them in order to drive.

"Pray, don't mention it," said Mrs. Vaile in her best manner.

Hiram drove rapidly back along the increasingly familiar road until he came to the comfortable old house which had come to him from his father—a good enough home for anybody, Angenette thought, as she recalled Hiram's old dream of having her share it with him and her gentle scorn of him and his aspirations. Lights yellowed the windows and delicious supper odors greeted them as the old housekeeper opened the door for them.

She took them up to the best chamber and made a fire for them and brought them hot water and an armful of fragrant linen towels.

And when they had bathed their faces and tidied their hair they came down to what Mrs. Vaile was certain was the best meal she had ever eaten.

Yet it was only roast beef warmed in its gravy and baked potatoes and home-made preserves and whipped cream cake.

Hiram played the part of host with a gentle dignity and courtesy that kept both himself and his guests at ease. Just at the close of the meal there was a commotion in the yard, a dog barked and a siren spoke. Le Fergie had come with the car. He must, of course, have time to rest and eat.

"You can't go on tonight," Hiram said to Mrs. Vaile, as he stood with her before the great fireplace in the living room. "My house and all in it are at your service so long as you will honor me with your presence."

"Thank you, Hiram," said Mrs. Vaile, warmly. "I'm afraid we shall be making a great trial of your hospitality, and yet I feel that perhaps it is best to avail ourselves of it. Don't you, Angenette?" She appealed to her daughter, but Angenette had gone.

She was in the parlor, opening the old piano that had belonged to Hiram's mother. The melody her fingers wrought floated through the house. She looked up presently. Hiram was there leaning upon the rosewood cover and watching her with grave, gray eyes. She ceased playing.

"Go on," he said. "I didn't come to disturb you. I came to listen. It is a long time since any one has touched this old piano. I never thought you would——" He paused.

"Didn't you know I'd come back some time, Hiram?" Angenette asked, playing again a little wildly.

"I hoped—but what's hoping, when the reality—" His voice broke. "Oh, you don't know what it means to have you here. For you know, Angenette, I used to have dreams."

Angenette's eyes were shining under their drooping lids.

"I, too, had dreams," she said softly, "and I have them still. They have—come back—since—I've been in the house—with you——"

"With me!"

And then she looked at him.

"Oh, I was a fool. You must despise me. But I want you to know——" She began to sob.

"Hush!" Hiram said, and he put his arms around her and drew her close.

THE GALLAGHER DIVORCE

"My name is Gallagher," said the stranger, as he entered Colonel Brown's office. "I called to see you about a suit for divorce."

"Take a seat," said the colonel.

"In the first place," said Gallagher, "I want to ask, can a divorce be obtained on the ground of general incompatibility?"

"I dunno," said the colonel. "I must ascertain the facts."

"Because, if it can, I want you to begin sixty-eight divorce suits for me tomorrow, upon that ground."

"Sixty-eight?"

"Let me explain. You see, a few years ago I went to Salt Lake City, and I was converted to the Mormon religion. When I joined Bishop Grubb said I ought to marry, and so I proposed for his six daughters, and we were consolidated at once. On the following Thursday the bishop died. He left eleven widows. His executors pointed out that I might probably assuage their grief and get a firmer grip on the property by taking them out of their lonely condition. So I married them, and also pooled in two sisters of one of them, living in Idaho, and a cousin of another—a cousin who was single, and had a cast in her eye."

"That made twenty, didn't it?" observed the colonel.

"Twenty. Well, then, the impression, your honor, naturally got around that I was a marrying man, and so the twelve apostles at their next meeting sealed to me four widows and an old maid that were drifting about the settlement, with no one in particular to look after them, and as I took the act good-naturedly, why, on the following week, Bishop Knox got the apostles to pass over to me a job lot of his relations, including two aunts, one grandmother, and a second cousin, while Bishop O'Toole threw in a stepsister, a mother-in-law, and three miscellaneous orphans, who were related to nobody. So, you see, I was gradually getting quite a little family about me."

"I see," said the colonel."

"And then, colonel, if any unattached women would come along in immigrant trains, they were always ordered to be married to me, so that eventually, in addition to my other wives, I had gathered in two Welsh women, a Mexican, an old lady from the Sandwich Islands, three Peruvians, the widow of a Japanese acrobat, and a Kickapoo squaw. I thought the heads of the church were a little hard on me, but I had to submit.

"Did you have a happy household?"

"I'm just coming to that. I can't say that we were all perfectly congenial, our tastes differed so. The Bishop Grubb delegation, for instance, would want caramels for breakfast in the morning, when the folks from Peru were determined to have clams. Bishop Knox's detachment would insist on cleaning house at the very time when Bishop O'Toole's relations wanted to give a party. If the Sandwich Islander and the squaw wanted to boil a dog or two in the soup-kettle, there was always a fuss with the other women, and the Mrs. Gallagher who came from Japan used to make the rest of the ladies furious by turning somersaults in the parlor when there was company, and by standing on her head on the piano stool. As for wash day! Well, one wanted it on Monday, another would have it on Tuesday, and so on. If there had been thirty-seven days in the week, we should have had washing going on on each one of them."

"No unanimity, as it were?" observed the colonel.

"Precisely. And then Emeline, one of my first batch of wives, had studied medicine, and she was always practicing upon the others.
others. She introduced whooping cough to the family in order to try a favorite remedy of hers. Imagine sixty-eight women in one house, with the whooping cough? And then she put ipecac in their tea a few weeks afterward, to see if it would give them asthma; and it did. The whole crowd went around gasping for breath, and I think the Mexican woman is probably short-winded for life. I remonstrated with Emeline, but the very next day she tried to vaccinate the old lady from the Sandwich Islands by boring a hole in her elbow with a gimlet."

"Didn't mind you, eh?"

"No. And so one day, about three weeks ago, I brought home a poodle for Julia, one of the younger wives. This looked a little like partiality, and of course, the sixty-seven others wanted a poodle apiece at once. Now, I'm not able to pay a dog tax sixty-eight times a year, so I declined. I saw there was trouble brewing, and the next day when I came home every woman of them had a dog of her own; been out and bought them. They ranged from bloodhounds to black-and-tan terriers. I remonstrated, and then—well, the women began to cry, and that set the dogs to barking, and then Lucinda went for Julia's back hair, and the other ladies joined in, and the dogs pretty soon began to engage in the controversy, and in a few moments what might have been a happy family circle was a good deal more like a copy of the battle of Waterloo. So I fled and took the first train for the East, and abandoned the Mormon religion permanently. Now, what want to know is if I can have those sixty-eight marriage bonds untied. Money is no object, so that I can get loose."

"I think it can be done," said the colonel. "Call in tomorrow."

And Mr. Gallagher withdrew with the air of a man whose mind had been greatly relieved.

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A Poor Guesser.

"On this trip in," said the Colfax conductor about 11:30 o'clock, "we'll begin to pick up the beaux. They commence leaving their lady loves about 11 o'clock. I've seen so many of them get on the car that I've gotten so I can tell which has said a loving good-by and which has had a scrap with her. It's in the way they pay their fare."

The car stopped and a young man stepped aboard.

"There's one," continued the conductor. "I'll get his fare and then come back and tell you how I think he got along with his lady love."

The fare was collected and the conductor returned to the man with whom he had been talking.

"They had a fight," he said. "I'd almost bet she told him to go and never return. Oh, I'm a student of human nature, you bet you!"

Just then another fellow boarded the car. He sat down by the "beau."

"Why, hello, John!" the new passenger said. "How are the wife and babies?"

"All well but the youngest girl," was the reply. "I'm going down to the drug store now to get her some cough medicine."

The conductor went to the other end of the car and stayed there as much as he could.

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Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (2)

The Odd Corners.

Dentist—Good morning, Mr. Giles, and how do you like the false teeth?

Giles—Well, zur, they fit a bit tight under the ears.

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For Youthful Eyes

POINTING.

Some people say it's wrong to point
  When you are on the street.
You musn't point at things you like
  Or people that you meet.
You often see a little hand
  Without a boy hitched to it,
A-pointing to the railway gate
  For people to go through it.
And on the guide-post there's a hand
  That's pointing out the way;
It points and points but never moves.
  And where the children play
There is a sign with that same hand,
  Pointing just every minute.
And in the newspaper it points
  To things important in it.
Of course it is a picture hand,
  But don't you wonder, though,
If ever once a truly boy,
  Wherever he would go,
Kept pointing, pointing all the time,
  Till, just to punish him,
They put a picture of his hand,
  With finger long and slim,
On every guide-post, gate and sign,
  Where it would mimic him?

THE DRAGON.

When Susie came down to breakfast she found a very unhappy family.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"Those robbers again," her father answered. "They came last night and took Willie Gray's box of tin soldiers, and two of the Cobbs' posts, and the Debbins' croquet set, and a lot of other things."

"Those robbers," said Susie, "are disgraceful. I should like to tell them so."

They certainly were. They lived in the mountains and every once in a while descended upon the quiet little town and caused so much trouble that every one firmly and finally decided that something ought to be done. But nothing ever was done. Every man in the town used to take his turn being night watchman, but not one of them ever managed to stay awake all night, and so the robbers came in quite silently and took whatever they wanted.

But this time Susie Sutton decided firmly and finally that something ought to be done, and Susie Sutton was a child of determination. Immediately after breakfast she put on her sunbonnet and set out in a venturesome mood for the mountain. She climbed and climbed until she was half way up. Then she came to a very interesting looking cave.

"Perhaps the robbers live here," she said, and she peeped in. Sure enough, there they were, and their captain was setting up a row of tin soldiers on the floor.

"Mr. Robber," said Susie, walking in. "I want to talk to you."

"I won't talk," said the robber, hastily gathering up his tin soldiers.

"Your conduct," began Susie, "is disgraceful." She had heard her father say that.

"I don't care," said the robber, "I'm not going to repent and that's all about it."

"Well," began Susie.

"There isn't any well," said the robber.

"But," began Susie.

"There isn't any but," said the robber.

"You're very disagreeable," said Susie.

"I like to be," said the robber.

"I'm sorry I ever came to see you," said Susie.

"I never invited you," said the robber.

"You're very rude, indeed," Susie declared.

"I want to be," said the robber. "Robbers are always rude."

"You musn't ever come to the town again," said Susie.

"I will come," persisted the robber. "You want to spoil all our fun. You're a very unpleasant little girl, and you can't stay any longer. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Susie. "I don't think you're a bit nice," and away she went. She was so indignant that she went on climbing straight up the mountain to get rid of her indignation. But when she got to the top she couldn't climb any further, naturally.

"I wish," she declared, "we had a night watchman who wouldn't go to sleep. Those robbers are perfectly disgraceful. I wish they were all sent to bed without their supper, I do!"

Just then she noticed a large hole near the top of the mountain, and being still in a venturesome mood, she made up her mind to explore. She looked in, but at that moment heard something coming out, and so she decided to wait. In a few minutes out crawled a great, long, green dragon, a most curious creature with a row of different colored electric lights along his back, and a huge bell tied under his chin with a pink ribbon, just like a kitten. Susie was beginning to be a little bit frightened, but the dragon only looked at her, and said pleasantly enough:

"Who are you? Where did you get that sunbonnet?"

"Susie Sutton. I made it," she answered.

"Are you? Did you?" said the dragon.

"Yes," said Susie, for one answer seemed to be enough for both questions.

"What else can you do?" asked the dragon.

"Well," said Susie, "I can make an omelet."

The dragon sighed—such a long sigh that Susie was quite alarmed.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't know," answered the dragon, gloomily. "I'm melancholy because I'm such a useless creature. I can't do anything."

"Can't you hemstitch?" asked Susie. "I can."

"No," answered the dragon, "I can't. And I can't make an omelet or a sunbonnet, either. And what is the use of a creature who can't make an omelet or a sunbonnet? Sometimes I get lonely up here and I think I'd like to go and live in town, but I'm sure they wouldn't want me if I couldn't do anything at all. What is the use of a creature who has only a row of different colored lights down his back and a silver bell under his chin?"

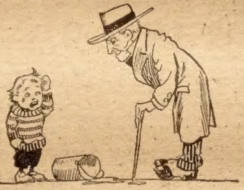
And then Susie had an idea. "Oh," she said, "I know what you could do. You could be a night watchman—your electric lights would be just the thing and you could ring your bell in case of danger."

"Splendid," cried the dragon, "and I'm always awake nights, too. I sleep in the daytime. I'll come right back with you now."

And so they trailed down the mountain, Susie and the dragon, and when they came to town and the people heard that the dragon was to be their night watchman, they threw up their caps with a shout of joy.

And he was a splendid night watchman, too. Whenever the robbers came near the town he rang his bell so violently that all the people awoke and chased them off.

Different.



Kind Gent—Come, my little man, you shouldn't cry over spilt milk.

Willie—Dat's all right, mister; but dis ain't no milk; dis is lemonade.

A Queer Wager.

A little boy said to his sister the other day: "I bet I can coax you to set fire to your dress."

"Well, I just guess you can't!" she cried, scornfully.

"What do you bet?"

"You are silly; of course you cannot; why should I bet anything?"

"Well, I'm willing to wager my new jack-knife."

"All right," laughed she. "I'll wager my Paris doll that you cannot." Then the boy began:

"Please set fire to your dress! Please, please do!"

"Are you tired?" asked his sister, at length.

"Well, I've won my bet, all right; I said I would coax you to do it, and I have," said the boy.

And now that brother and sister are trying to decide the bet. And he is wondering if he wants the doll, and she is wondering if she wants the jack-knife, anyhow.

THE POET AND THE SEA.

A poet stood by the salty sea,
  And his face was pale and wan,
And, strange as it appeared to me,
He lifted his voice in apostrophe,
Addressing these words to the salty sea:
  "O, rolling waves, roll on!"

Now, the magic of poets is known to be great,
  Though their faces are pale and wan,
And, strange as the story is to relate,
From that day and hour, both early and late,
As if pursued by relentless fate,
  The waves have been rolling on.

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